Shepherds

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER, 1955

Table of Contents

PERSONAL EVANGELISM

A Quenchless Love for Souls 1
by Bishop Arthur J. Moore

EMPHASES FOR LABOR DAY

Evangelism and the Worker 3
by Ralph C. Abele

"Your Business Is Being a Christian" 5
by J. Claude Evans

WORLD WIDE COMMUNION

World Wide Communion Sunday 6

World Wide Communion in the Local Church .. 9
by James R. Webb, Jr.

THE LOCAL CHURCH AT WORK

Experiment in Friendship 11
by Myra Johnson

The Committee of the Month 12
by Mrs. R. C. McIntyre

This Church Meets the Challenge of a Great City 13
by Mrs. Harriett Wesley

The Rural Revival 14
by James Hankins

How to Create an Evangelistic Atmosphere 17
by A. C. Archibald

This Board of Stewards Visits for Christ 19
by Dana Dawson, Jr.

PRAYER EMPHASIS

Since God Answers Prayer 20
by Fred Cloud

The Arctic Prayer Circle 21
by Walter E. Mischke

PROGRAM OF EVANGELISM

Pastors' Schools of Evangelism 22
by Lawrence F. Hawley

WORLD EVANGELISM

Centennial Year in Australia-New Zealand Churches 23

Uniting the World through Family Devotions ... 24

Evangelism on the Philippine Frontier 26

The Institutional Church in Australia 28

They Have Stirred the Nation 30
by Roy L. Smith

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A Quenchless Love for Souls

by

Bishop Arthur J. Moore
Atlanta Area

EVANGELISM is a word written large in the New Testament. By both His teaching and example, Jesus gave infinite dignity to Christian witness and imposed the obligations of such service on all who would be His followers. He said, "Come unto me, and find forgiveness, rest, and guidance"; but He also said, "Go out among men who are astray and seek to recall them to right thinking and Christian living." He spoke frequently of being sent of the Father, but He also made it unmistakably clear that His disciples are likewise sent. No man who names the name of Christ is without a mission, and no Church calling Him Lord dare ignore the moral imperative to work and witness for Christ. Evangelism is not the only business of the Church, but it is the main business of the Church.

Paramount Tradition

The paramount Methodist tradition is that of evangelism. Nobody ever referred to the Wesleyan Movement as a philosophical or theological enterprise. It has always and everywhere been called a revival. The primary concern of Mr. Wesley and his associates in England, and of Francis Asbury and his Circuit Riders in America, was to save individual souls from sin. We know that our Methodist Fathers were interested in other things of a moral nature, but above all other concerns was their over-mastering passion to save men from sin. If, then, tradition is something indisputably rooted in historical origins, evangelism is the leading Methodist tradition. Departure from it renders one that much less a Methodist.

When the Christmas Conference in 1784

(*Continued on next page*)

organized the Church out of what had been a more or less haphazard revival, this injunction was written down for the guidance of the preachers: "You have nothing to do but to save souls. You are not to preach so many times, or to take care of this or that society, but to save as many souls as you can." We would all agree that such instruction does not include some things we now believe vital to the Christian message. But there it stands in the record, and it represents the essential genius of original Methodism. The words needed no interpretation. When these preachers spoke of saving souls, they knew exactly what they meant.

Spiritual Needs

All this evangelical fervor, rested back on theology, applies to the spiritual needs of men. It embraced these essentials: All men are sinners. Christ died for all men. All men can be saved by repentance and faith. They can know they are saved through the witness of the Spirit.

The one fact that sent the early Methodists to the open fields and eventually to the ends of the earth with infectious joy was that God in Christ had to come to the rescue of sinning humanity. They evangelized everywhere because they believed in a Christ who was the Saviour from sin, the Creator of new character, and the Guarantor of everlasting life. Their main message was that God had heard the cry of broken humanity and, in the person of His Son, had sent a Saviour. They never dismissed it, nor obscured it by any naturalistic interpretation. They declared it in creed, experienced it in life, and expressed it in a glad and intense evangelism. With warm hearts and eager spirits, they went everywhere to bring men into a saving knowledge of the truth.

The normal mood of Methodism has always been the evangelistic mood. The stirring story of our advance across this country and across the earth is the story of a resistless evangelism. God raised up Methodism to be Christianity in earnest, and no Church can forget its original mission and have bright prospects. We set out, two centuries ago, to win men from the kingdom of darkness and evil and to organize them into a Church which would bring the ideals and spirit of Jesus to bear upon the life of the world. We do not have to acquire a spirit of evangelism. We are by nature evangelistic. We are the trustees of a complete gospel which offers men release from sin and offers hope and society. We proclaim the story of a transforming cross, an empty tomb, and a risen and glorified Lord.

A Quickened Interest

What is more needed today? One could hardly claim that we are in the midst of a revival at the present time, but undoubtedly we are witnessing a quickened interest in things spiritual. Soldiers, statesmen, and writers have been confessing their faith, sometimes in language the Church has not employed. The facts of spiritual life have come into the common speech of man. Writers no longer hesitate to discuss religion. In fact, one of the great gains out of the stress and anxiety of war is the recovery of the consciousness of God and of a sense of responsibility to Him. The time seems ripe for the Church to interpret Christ to the inquiring mind and seeking heart of our time. If we are to succeed, we must have an unquenchable faith in the reality of the gospel we proclaim.

The urgency of soul which characterized our fathers must be recovered. Surely, by this time we have discovered that soft sayings about virtue, the evolution of the race, and the inherent goodness of mankind will not produce the revival we need. We must speak of the ghastly reality of sin, of the atonement of Christ, of justification by faith, of the eternal profit of goodness, and of the everlasting loss of those who will not have Christ. We must be careful to deal with the intellectual difficulties and the moral and spiritual problems of these exciting days. Our gospel must be suited to the anguish of these times. But we will not help the groping mind of humanity to find God by underestimating the need for redemption, or by preaching that the cross is only an example of how a good man could bear pain. Men must be made to see that sin is a gulf which separates them from God, and that Christ, by dying on the cross, did something for him he could not do for himself.

Stones for Bread

Our generation would be religious on its own terms. It would run sentimentally to the manger at Bethlehem, but at Calvary it would "stand afar off beholding the night." It seems, at times, that it prefers a religion without suffering and sacrifice. If we offer that kind of religion, we will be giving the hungry-hearted world a stone when it begs for bread.

Methodism marched into the eighteenth century singing, "No foot of land do we possess, no cottage in this wilderness." It lacked numbers, social standing, and stately cathedrals. The mighty and learned of the earth were not in its membership; but, with its affirmation of Christ's power, it brought salvation to the sinning, comfort to the sorrowing, and security and confidence to the dying. It brought to men everywhere an intellectual and spiritual awakening.

There is need for restating the original purpose and passion of our Church because there is always the danger of magnifying other expressions of the Christian life at the expense of this one. Here lies our peril. We do not aim at individuals as we once did. We see men grouped, and our vision and concern are diffused over the mass. We are inclined to make even our preachers into ecclesiastical engineers rather than shepherds. We need to read once more the story of the old prophet bending over one sick child, of Andrew seeking his brother Simon, of Jesus talking to one needy woman at the well. There are always those who will volunteer for the larger, more dramatic, and less taxing tasks; but it demands nerve and energy to gain recruits for Christ one by one.

Christ's Way

By saving men individually the Church saves society; and, by saving society, the Kingdom of God is builded in the earth. There are those who criticize this one-by-one method, but the Master used it and the writer knows of none better. No kind of work has more promise in it, or is more fruitful in blessing to one's spiritual life, than earnest and well directed attempts at individual evangelism.

A faithful preacher of another generation had this said of him: "There was about him the transforming beauty of a quenchless love for souls." A minister may be able, attractive, and instrutcive; but without this "quenchless love for souls," his ministry remains only sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. A layman may give his church much successful leadership. He may love and serve many good causes. But what an advantage would accrue to the Church if he were so moved by the spirit of Christ that nothing less than introducing his fellow men to Christ would satisfy him.

So for pastors, laymen, young people —yea, for the whole Church—the thing we need most is a tender, intelligent, and constantly increasing intimacy with Christ. It is only thus that our individual lives rise to their best, and the Church has breadth of view, character, and concern. This is evangelism.

Harold M. Lambert

Evangelism

AND THE WORKER

Looking Toward Labor Day, 1955

by Ralph C. Abele, pastor
Holy Ghost Evangelical and Reformed Church
St. Louis, Missouri

Background

It is quite plain to me now: the two chief determinants of my boyhood and teen-age years were the church where my parents belonged and the job my father had (or didn't have). I grew up on the banks of the Licking River in Zanesville, a small industrial city in southeastern Ohio. My parents were a part of a small colony of first and second generation Germans and German-Swiss immigrants who had found jobs with the railroads, the wood works, the tile factories, the clay industries, the steel mills, and the "glass house." Some of them, too, were butchers and bakers and brewery workers and stone masons and farmers.

Organized labor was all but unknown. Wages were low. Folks made ends meet for their large families by diligent gardening and their own household industries such as baking, sewing, knitting, and canning. Almost everybody kept chickens. Some kept a cow or two. Most of the men, sons of hard-working peasants, accepted uncritically the factory-fostered notion that there was something God-ordained about a ten- or twelve-hour working day. The woman's working day was much longer than that. Our homes were lighted with candles and kerosene lamps; heated with wood and coal in stoves and fireplaces. Few had running water. All of us used outdoor privies.

My father was a skilful gardener but an unskilled factory worker. For years his wages ranged from $12 to $20 weekly. His given name was "Christian," but that did not prevent him from learning and employing certain expletives when the pressures of life became too great. Especially do I remember his talk when times were hard and he was out of work and we, his unreasonable children, kept on expecting three meals a day, and sickness struck, and the doctor had to be called, and his fee added to the already half-maddening debt.

I remember his bitter talk about the "damned Hunkies," meaning the Hungarian immigrants who had colonized around the old Tube Mill in Putnam, to the south of Zanesville. "Why didn't they stay where they belonged? What right had they to come and take jobs away from God-fearing native Americans?" He was just as bitter toward the Japanese who, he thought, were flooding the market with cheap goods and causing unemployment in American factories. The difference was that when he damned the Japanese, he invoked the name of God. My father was one among thousands upon thousands of American workers who, in their insecurity and lack of wise labor leadership and in their condition of industrial puppetry, could not understand how much they were like and how much they had in common with Hungarian and Japanese workers—in fact, ALL workers.

Vividly, too, do I remember my father's talk as often, after worship on Sunday, we walked the more than three miles home from the old German Evangelical Church on South Seventh Street, now Pilgrim Evangelical and Reformed Church. More than once he remarked: "Why don't the pastor ever preach about my problems as a worker?"

When the great flood rolled through the Ohio Valley in 1913, our old homestead was ruined; and, not long afterward, I went to work in a glove factory as a matter of family necessity. Later, during vacations, as a student I held jobs in a wood works, a steel mill, and a large tile factory. The working day in the wood works and tile factory was nine hours; in the steel mill it was twelve, alternating days one week and nights one week. Earlier, at the close of one work summer, in my sixteenth year, I notified my employer at the wood works that I would be quitting soon to return to school. "You're big enough to quit school," he said to me, "stay with us and I'll raise your wages to $3.50 per week." I was then getting $3.00.

Transition

We are now in the sixth decade of the twentieth century, and the condition of the worker as well as the industrial productivity and capacity of our nation are vastly different from what they were in the second and third decades. Workers in trades and industries numbering more than fifteen million, approximately one-third of them Roman Catholic, are organized into unions. To be sure, the struggle of workers for the achievement of personal dignity and economic justice through unions and associations of unions still goes on. In some backward spots it is still bitter. But, generally speaking, the battle has been won.

It is not news, but it needs to be noted that both Church and Synagogue in America have repeatedly proclaimed the right of workers to organize and have extolled the practice of collective bargaining. Almost every major denomination in American Protestantism now has a Commission or Department of Christian Social Action (the nomenclature varies) in which there is abiding concern for the worker and his problems. The Presbyterians have

established an Institute of Industrial Relations, which, among other things, conducts summer seminars in industrial communities. The Methodists are providing similar summer seminars in Boston. The Department of Church Economic Life of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in America is doing a magnificent job by collecting, collating, and making available for distribution information and experience in this area of industry and religion, the worker and the Church, the Christian and his vocation.

But

As pastors and people in local churches, we are not doing too well in communicating to workers the power and disciplines of God through Christ. We simply are not winning trade and industrial workers into a wholehearted, life-renewing relationship with the Church, whose chief job is evangelizing and letting herself be evangelized.

Is this particular job important with respect to the number of persons involved? In 1952, the membership in 382 congregations of the United Lutheran Church in America could be categorized as follows: 42 per cent in urban industrial and manual work; 21 per cent in white collar jobs; 14 per cent owners, managers, and professional people; 20 per cent farmers. If other denominations remotely approximate that picture, your concern and mine had better be very strong for very local reasons.

How shall we conceive of evangelism as we attempt to implement the New Testament imperative in the 1955 local and world setting?

"The Church is set in the world to proclaim the good news of hope in word and deed to all men, in every moment and in every situation, however seemingly hopeless." "Jesus Christ is the gospel we proclaim—to evangelize is to participate in His life and in His ministry to the world," says a leaflet on evangelism printed prior to the Evanston World Council. But the Church, in one sense the organized believers in and followers of Jesus Christ, as she addresses herself to organized workers and potential members of unions, may no longer rely upon the old verbal clichès and Billy Sunday techniques.

The Sheffield Industrial Mission of the Church of England has found that out in a period of ten years' experience. "Traditional Christian terminology has lost its meaning. A new kind of piety must be found. The man who keeps curses from his tongue, beer from his lips, and football coupons from his hands may stir idle curiosity in his fellows, but he is hardly likely to arouse in them real interest or respect." These are the significant questions, according to a report from the Mission: "In what way can a worker express his faith in actions so that his comrades can see the point? What does Christian love and justice mean in terms of specific issues of industrial, economic and political life?" These are the questions that intelligent workers of the United States are asking, too, and Christians unwilling to wrestle with the same questions as humble brethren of the workers will be completely ignored.

Flash Back

Things have happened to me too since those far-off days of cheap labor and soupbone living standards in Zanesville. I have degrees from two theological seminaries and two universities. I know a little about academic life and thinking. And after thirty years in the ministry, I know somewhat more about the mentality and attitudes of ministers and the class character of most Protestant Churches. Many things could be said about ministers and churches that would shine with a very great splendor. But still I am appalled, sometimes by the ignorance, more often by the indifference, of ministers to what goes on in the worker's mind and in his home, in his union, and at the bargaining table.

Therefore

If, as a part of our observance of Labor Day in 1955, we are to begin to take seriously the evangelization of the worker in the Name of Our Master, the "Master Workman of the Race," we can take these very elementary but significant steps:

1. Use the Labor Sunday Message issued by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in America in our worship on Sunday, Sept. 4 or 11. Use the new "Message" annually. (This will be printed in *The Christian Advocate* before Labor Day. Copies are available from the Board of Social and Economic Relations, 740 Rush St., Chicago 11, Ill.)
2. Read "Ethics in a Business Society," by Marquis Childs and Douglas Cater, a Mentor Book costing 35¢; and "By the Way," the autobiography of Francis J. McConnell.
3. Write to be placed on the mailing list of the Department of Church and Economic Life of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 297 Fourth Ave., New York City 10, N. Y.
4. Become a member of "Religion and Labor Institute," 3292 N. High St., Columbus, Ohio.
5. Encourage members of your church who belong to labor unions to take an active part in the affairs of the union. Attend union meetings occasionally with them.
6. Go out of your way to get acquainted with labor leaders. Let them know you want to learn. Invite them to worship if they have no church affiliation. (How can there be evangelization without communication?)
7. Sponsor conferences of labor and management.
8. Lend your voice and influence to the growing momentum of "The Christian and His Vocation" concern. (See Report of Section VI from the Second Assembly at Evanston.)
9. Take with huge gobs of salt, or consign to the waste basket, papers and magazines that come to your desk unsolicited purporting to give the proper Christian slant on economics and other social subjects or wanting to mobilize you for this or that.
10. In your habit of personal intercessory prayer, why not include leaders of industry and leaders of labor? Offer special prayers when you know collective bargaining is taking place in a local situation or on a national level.
11. Give support "in word and deed" to the structure and program of the Board of Social and Economic Relations, or similar department, in your denomination.

Above all, let us keep ourselves immersed in the Bible; our minds disciplined with good theological reading; our hearts melting pots where the love of God is transmuted into an unquenchable love of people.

Finale

No minister of the gospel in these revolutionary times may consider himself effective, if he is not frequently the target of brickbats coming from all directions, especially the left and the right, and of javelin thrusts hurled by his own inner consciousness of involvement in sin.

"Your Business Is Being a Christian"

Some Thoughts Pointing Toward A Christian Understanding of Work

by J. Claude Evans

Editor, *South Carolina Methodist Advocate*

FOR some centuries now, a secularization of vocation has been taking place in Western culture. So much so, that the modern young person, in choosing his lifework, is more often than not guided by secular values rather than Christian. Today's youth or young adult surveys job opportunities in terms of egocentric rewards and goals. Does the job have earning appeal? Will it maintain the standards which middle class culture values so highly? Does the job have prestige appeal? Will it carry in itself the rewards of honored position and power?

Moreover, work has increasingly come to be viewed as something you do long enough, to get rich enough, to stop working. Modern man's positive pursuit of leisure has a negative result in the growth of dislike of work. Hosts of people today are working to stop working. They thoroughly dislike their jobs. They work only out of necessity and the pressure of secular goals. The ultimate proof of this is modern man's flight from drudgery, which to a degree infects us all.

Further, many modern work situations are not only secular, they are also unchristian. Alexander Miller took a group of college students to work in the steel mills one summer. They were determined, as Christians, to give a "fair day's work for a fair day's pay." In a few days, the overproduction caused by the work of these students thoroughly snarled the production schedule of the mill. Nor was it the workers alone who protested. Managers joined the workers in saying, "You must slow down. Otherwise you will upset the work schedule of the whole plant." Obviously, this involved the young Christians in ethical compromise, whether they wanted it or not.

Too, modern society is obsessed with an insistence that all secular work must be personality-rewarding, that we must be "happy" in our work. This is the theme that produces all too often just the opposite. Hundreds of moderns are frustrated and unhappy in their work. The required humdrum and tedium of many jobs becomes, for them, drudgery. And thus are triggered escape mechanisms which reveal themselves in the growing number of alcoholics and mental patients in our society.

In the light of this modern secular view of work and the distortions it brings to man and society, Christians need to discover the distinctive emphases of a Christian doctrine of work.

The New Testament understanding of the word *work* is something different from man's daily labor. It is really not man's work at all, but God's work. Faith itself is not man's work, but God's: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:29.) So whatever of good works is in man comes from God. From this, it can be seen that the New Testament views "the proper work of Christians (as) the furtherance of the Gospel and the service of the purpose of God." (Richardson, Alan, *The Biblical Doctrine of Work,* SCM Press, London, p. 33.)

Man's first calling, his primary vocation, then, is to be a witnessing Christian. Each person may have different talents to offer to the Kingdom. But each one is called to fulfill his own unique work in the Church. (I Cor. 12.) Paul, for example, was not "called" to be a tent-maker. This was not his vocation in which he lived the Christian life. It was the other way around! His vocation was to be a Christian witness throughout Asia Minor. He simply earned his living as a tent-maker.

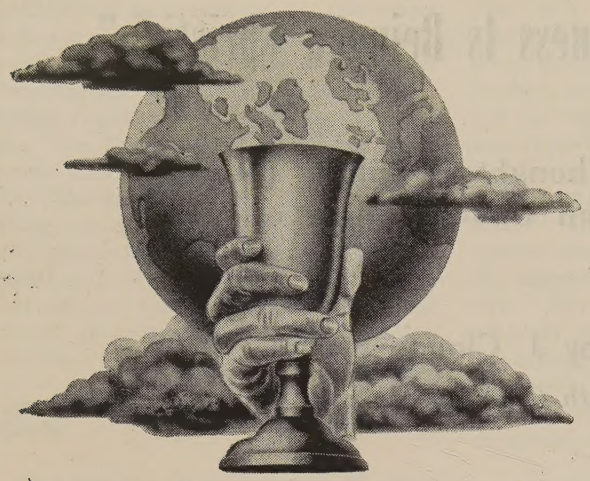
What, then, of modern man's earthly work, his daily toil for bread and home? What are we to do with the idea so prevalent in the modern Church that one's Christian vocation should and can be one's profession? On this view, some are called to be Christian ministers, but others are called to be Christian doctors, lawyers, businessmen, and so on.

Thus have we insisted these past years. But this is not in accord with the biblical insight about vocation. Man's primary vocation is his call to be a witnessing Christian wherever his God-given talents indicate his service in the Church is needed. His secular work is not his chief work. It is simply his method of earning a living. As such, it is not to be despised. As Paul accepted this tent-making, we can accept our secular work as an area of service to God, remembering all the while that our primary vocation is being a Christian.

So all men are called to do some kind of work in the secular world as part of their service to God. As Christians, we are not exempt from work, even from some work that may be drudgery and far from personality-rewarding. Much work that keeps the world going is not personality-rewarding in itself, but is no less necessary. The garbage must be removed whether it is personality-rewarding to do so or not. It can be removed rebelliously under necessity. Or it can be removed in "service to God."

This is the Old Testament insight of work as an ordinance of God. Work is a part of God's law for man. It is a divine requirement for human life. Work is therefore not evil, but good. We participate in the divine activity when we do our work willingly and obediently as service to God.

Having this attitude, Christians put a deeper meaning into their work. They recognize their primary vocation to be witnesses for Christ. This is their real work. This is their first calling. If they do their secular work in the light of this first vocation, God will see to all the personality-reward that is appropriate.



WORLD WIDE COMMUNION SUNDAY

October 2, 1955

This year give it the emphasis it deserves in your church
Make it the most meaningful, helpful Sunday of the year

A NEW PROGRAM SUGGESTED

FOR fifteen years now, all denominations that are constituent bodies of the National Council (formerly Federal Council) of Churches of Christ in America, in cooperation with its Department of Evangelism, has emphasized a church loyalty program, with particular reference upon church attendance, beginning on World Wide Communion Sunday, the first Sunday in October. Much good has been accomplished, for church attendance is one of the most important features of a person's and a church's spiritual life.

But recently, with the great RIAL (Religion in American Life) interdenominational church attendance advertising program coming in November each year (see next issue of SHEPHERDS) and with the remarkable results obtained in the January to Easter Church Attendance Crusades (November and December SHEPHERDS will give full details), it is well that emphasis at World Wide Communion time be not upon church attendance, as such, but upon the *Communion* aspect—real communion with Christ and fellowship with Christ's people. This is as it should be.

So, accordingly, pastors, Commissions on Membership and Evangelism, and churches are challenged to lend their efforts in making World Wide Communion Sunday the time for a most concerted emphasis on Christian fellowship. Here is offered the best opportunity of the year to place major emphasis upon

Communion with Christ
Fellowship with other Christians

When we remember that the Lord's Table is 25,000 miles long, we know that it takes in peoples of all races, nationalities, and languages; and we are thrilled. Communion with Christ causes Christian hearts to beat more nearly together, for we lose all of our differences in Christ our Lord, the world Saviour. And when we realize that our opportunity for Christian fellowship starts right where we are—at the Lord's Table, in the Lord's House, and in our own community in our week-day, work-day world—somehow or other we become more truly Christian and have greater Christian joy and fellowship in our everyday lives.

Of course, it is desired that all Christ's people attend church (without exception) on World Wide Communion Sunday. Special efforts should be made to urge them to be present to commune with Christ and to participate in the Christian fellowship; but, once they are there, let the dominant purpose be *Communion* with Christ and *Fellowship* with Christ's people.

In Methodist churches a special offering will be received for the Fellowship of Suffering and Service, for rehabilitation of overseas Christians and of underprivileged peoples and lands. This very important and worthy cause should be given full support, should help to emphasize the fellowship of Christians the world around, and should bind our hearts together as we share the suffering and service of other lands.

A NEW COVENANT OF "DEDICATION"

WHEREAS, in the years gone by, the covenant card for World Wide Communion Sunday has been a pledge to attend on that Sunday and on successive Sundays during the loyalty emphasis, the covenant card this year emphasizes

1. COMMUNION WITH CHRIST
   - through the Sacrament, and
   - through Bible reading and prayer
2. FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHERS
   - through better daily attitudes, and
   - through daily witnessing

Such a covenant or "Dedication" should be wholesome for every church member, regardless of denomination, and should prove a spiritual blessing to every church that presents it to its people. (See card illustrated on page 8.)

To match the card an additional helpful item is available (but entirely optional, and useable either with or without the card) in the form of a little leaflet folder, entitled "Preparing Spiritually for World Wide Communion Sunday." This leaflet could well be distributed with the covenant card ahead of World Wide Communion Sunday, or it could be

placed in the hands of every participant at the World Communion Service and read with him, ahead of the Sacrament, as the searching meditation for the morning. It is a series of searching questions (prepared by Dr. G. Ernest Thomas, Director of Spiritual Life) around the themes of (1) Communion with Christ and (2) Fellowship with Others. Each section concludes with a prayer of dedication. The right use of this might well prove to be a spiritual epoch in the life of a person.

OTHER "NEW TOOLS" AVAILABLE

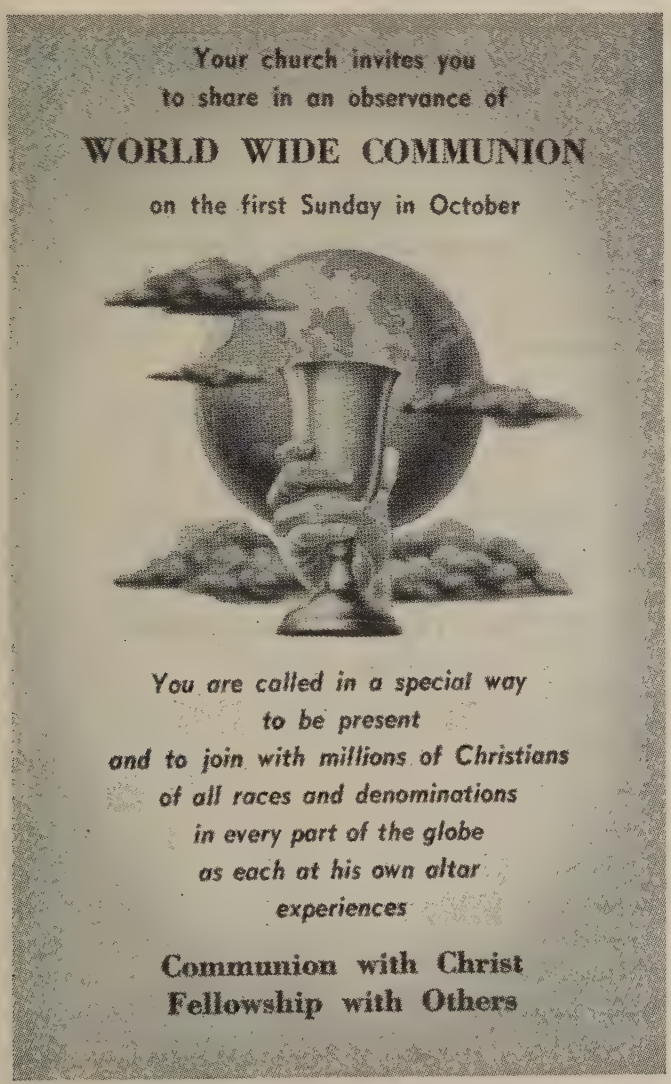
All Printed Materials are but helps, "tools" that are made available to those who desire to use them for greater success.

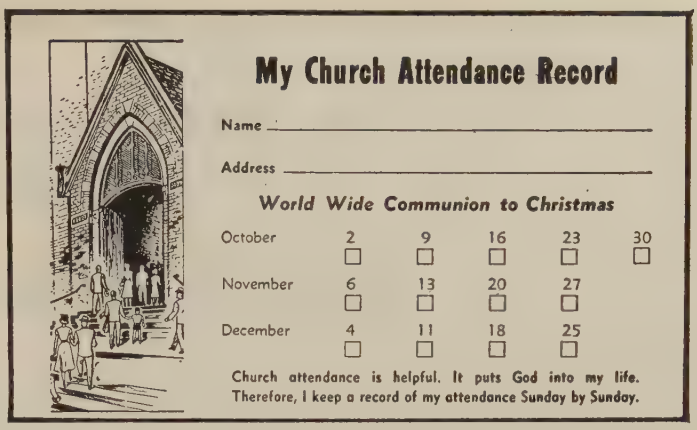
Other new tools, prepared solely as possible helps, are the following:

1. A Printed Letter. A letter, already written and printed and needing only to be signed and mailed, telling of World Wide Communion Sunday and the new emphasis to be made, and urging that all members attend without fail.

2. Newspaper Mats. One-column and two-column newspaper mats (giving the design used at the head of this article) for use in connection with a news article or a paid ad by the church.

Shown below, in actual size, is the World Wide Communion Invitation Card. This two-color card is available from Tidings at $1.00 per 100.


Your church invites you
to share in an observance of
WORLD WIDE COMMUNION
on the first Sunday in October
You are called in a special way
to be present
and to join with millions of Christians
of all races and denominations
in every part of the globe
as each at his own altar
experiences
Communion with Christ
Fellowship with Others


My Church Attendance Record
Name
Address
World Wide Communion to Christmas
October 2 9 16 23 30
November 6 13 20 27
December 4 11 18 25
Church attendance is helpful. It puts God into my life.
Therefore, I keep a record of my attendance Sunday by Sunday.

Shown above is a miniature reproduction of the Record of Attendance Card. This card, actually 3x5 inches, is available from Tidings at 50¢ per 100.

3. World Wide Communion Stamps. Beautiful, two-color stamps portraying the world and the communion cup, with the words "World Wide Communion: First Sunday in October," in sheets of 100 stamps. To be used on church letters and business letters ahead of World Communion Sunday.

INVITATION CARD

Other Possibilities are the use of a beautiful, two-color invitation card (to be mailed to every member and constituent). Such a card has been very popular in the past. The card this year has been newly designed and should be in much demand. (See illustration.)

A letterhead is also available for pastors and churches who desire to write their own letter of invitation, according to the demands and plans of the local situation.

As usual, helpful leaflets by eminent authors are available. These include leaflets by E. Stanley Jones and Bishop W. Earl Ledden. See pages 10 and 32 and the order blank in front of the magazine.

MAKE COMMUNION SUNDAY SPIRITUALLY MEANINGFUL

These are but suggestions, and all printed materials are but tools or helps. Take them or leave them. Whether you use them or not—all of them, some of them, or none of them—what is of supreme importance is that you and your church provide the opportunity for your people to make the greatest spiritual use of World Wide Communion Sunday. To this end, pray now. To this end, plan now. Do it for the glory of God, the exaltation of the crucified Christ who is now the world Saviour, and the glorious fellowship of Christians.

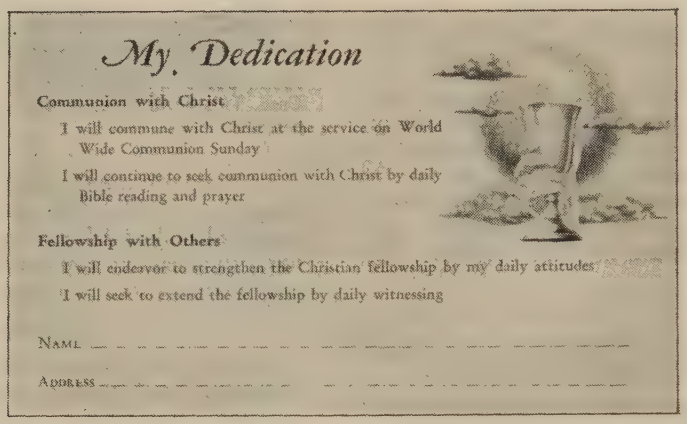
POSTSCRIPT—CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Many churches in years gone by have placed a "My Church Attendance Record Card" in the hands of each member as a reminder for him to attend church each Sunday from World Wide Communion Sunday through Christmas, and as an aid to help him resume regular attendance following the summer vacation period. For those churches which want to retain this helpful feature, and for others which might want to try it, a similar card is made available this year also (see illustration).

For churches that want to promote an intensive Church Attendance Campaign from October to New Year's (rather than from New Year's to Easter), "See You in Church Sunday" and other materials are still available from Tidings. (Write Tidings for church attendance materials order blanks, or use order blanks in previous issues of Shepherds.)

VITAL MATERIALS FOR AN EFFECTIVE OBSERVANCE OF

World Wide Communion


My Dedication
Communion with Christ
I will commune with Christ at the service on World Wide Communion Sunday
I will continue to seek communion with Christ by daily Bible reading and prayer
Fellowship with Others
I will endeavor to strengthen the Christian fellowship by my daily attitudes
I will seek to extend the fellowship by daily witnessing
NAME
ADDRESS

"MY DEDICATION" CARD

75c per 100

This attractive card, printed in bluish-purple ink, with air brush effect, is the heart of an effective observance of World Wide Communion as it pledges individuals to share Communion with Christ and to have fellowship with others. Order in quantities now for presentation to your people **before** World Wide Communion Sunday, October 2.

INVITATION CARDS

$1.00 per 100

A completely new and attractive card for mailing to members or leaving with them in visitation. Contains a personal invitation to be present on World Wide Communion Sunday. Two colors. Will help to increase attendance on World Wide Communion Sunday. This card is illustrated on page 7. Order in quantities now for distribution *before* World Wide Communion Sunday.

WORLD WIDE COMMUNION MATS

1-Column—15c each
2-Column—20c each

These mats, containing the new World Wide Communion symbol, are for use in newspapers, printed bulletins, etc.

WORLD WIDE COMMUNION STAMPS

20c per sheet of 100

These beautiful, two-color stamps are excellent for pasting on envelopes, letterheads, etc.

ORDER FROM

Tidings

Headquarters for Evangelistic Materials
1908 Grand Ave., Nashville 5, Tenn.

World Wide *Communion* in the Local Church

by James R. Webb, Jr.
Pastor, First Methodist Church
Bainbridge, Georgia

CAN you imagine a table twenty-five thousand miles long? On World Communion Sunday, the first Sunday in October, the Lord's Table will reach around the world!

As you think of this special observance, picture yourself in your own local church, taking communion with your congregation. With reverent imagination, consider some of the wider meanings of this great Day. Jesus said at the Last Supper, "This do in remembrance. . . ." What does World Communion Sunday help us to remember?

World-Wide Fellowship

First, it helps us to remember that we are part of a world-wide fellowship.

When the World Council of Churches was organized at Amsterdam in the summer of 1948, a great communion service was held in the Nieuwe Kirk, across the street from the palace of the queen of Holland. More than a thousand participants, representing most of the nations of the world and most of the major Protestant denominations, came and knelt together to partake of the Holy Communion. Dr. Jesse M. Bader said of it: "Everyone present was impressed with a sense of fellowship with Christ and with Christians throughout the world. The whole service seemed aglow with his divine Presence."

Such a realization can come true for each of us on World Communion Sunday. It used to be said of the far-flung English dominions that "The sun never sets on the British Empire." How much truer today of the Kingdom of God! As our earth spins on its axis the first Sunday in October, the sun will dawn each hour of the twenty-four upon lands where worshiping Christians praise the name of Christ.

Kneeling at the brief span of my own church's altar, it will be easy to imagine that an invisible line of worshipers stretches out beyond the last man . . . to the ends of the earth. Some will bow in majestic cathedrals in great cities; some, in plain frame buildings in the open country; some, in tiny white-painted churches in the mountain valleys. Others will meet in crude chapels erected by the natives in the Pacific islands, or under brush arbors, or even in the open air. As I think of these millions of Christians, the conviction grows that my local congregation and I are part of something truly great. I remember that I am not the disciple of some narrow provincial leader, whose meager following will soon die out in the world; but I am the disciple of a Saviour whose love is as wide as humanity, One who shall be our immortal leader until the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We see the truth of what Dr. Van Dusen said after his journeys to far-flung mission fields: "Only in our lifetime has the Christian mission penetrated to the remoter regions of the earth, so that today there are vigorous and growing, if sometimes tiny, cells of the Christian Church on every continent, among every race, and in every major nation. . . . It is the first truly world movement this planet has ever seen."

On World Communion Sunday, then, the horizons of my own spirit are pushed far back. I sense that in my littleness I am yet a real part of the greatest cause on earth, and my local church is a link in that "endless line of splendor" which girdles the globe.

For All Men

Again, on World Communion Sunday I remember that Christ died for all men.

The universality of His atonement is made vividly real on this day. I often marvel how He is the Saviour of all sorts and conditions of men. When I, as the minister, serve the communion elements, I sometimes notice the hands of the people reaching out across the altar. How different those hands! There are the delicate, jeweled hands of wealthy women, the toil-worn hands of hard working mothers, the callous, sun-tanned hands of day laborers, the tiny tender hands of small children. Yet all those hands line up at the altar together! It makes one believe that hands which are brought thus together by the nail-pierced hand of Christ will be hands which can be linked in cooperative endeavor for building a better world!

The communion service becomes a

For Your World Wide Communion

World Wide Communion Bulletin
$1.25 per 100

Pastors who do not subscribe to a regular weekly bulletin service prefer to use this bulletin because of its appropriateness and World Communion message. Inside pages are left blank for printing or mimeographing local program and announcements. Non-denominational.

Printed Communion Service
$1.50 per 100

This is a Communion Service, and is ready for use. It contains the prayers, scripture, responses, etc., for minister and people, being designed for churches which desire a fresh form, and yet one that is adapted from the Ritual itself.

My Church Attendance Record
50¢ per 100

Supply every member of the church and Sunday school with one of these cards to keep his own attendance record from World Wide Communion Sunday through Christmas.

Attendance Registration Cards
50¢ per 100; $2.25 per 500; $4.00 per 1,000

The use of this card encourages attendance and locates prospects. Register your church attendance on World Wide Communion and other selected Sundays by giving each person present a card on those Sundays. Order in large quantities for several Sundays.

COMMUNION LEAFLETS

The Meaning of the Communion, by E. Stanley Jones $2.00 per 100

This leaflet is an excellent message on the communion. Excellent for mailing to members before World Wide Communion Sunday. Very popular.

I Take the Cup $2.00 per 100
by Eugene Golay

An excellent message on the personal and social implications of the communion.

"Draw Near With Faith" $2.00 per 100

This inspiring leaflet by Bishop W. Earl Ledden was written especially for World Wide Communion Sunday.

TIDINGS

Headquarters for Evangelistic Materials

1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tenn.

dramatic symbol of our common faith. On World Communion Sunday, people of many races and social backgrounds and diverse circumstances will be uniting in a simultaneous observance. The Lord's Supper is our most universal sacrament. In observing it on that day, we will be saying, "Christ died for all of us."

Thank God for that kind of Saviour in this kind of world! He is not the Redeemer of one race only, but of all races. He is not the friend only of the rich or of the poor, but of both alike.

During the first World War, Marshall Foch, the great military leader, stepped into a church. He walked down the aisle and knelt at the altar. A poor peasant woman who was kneeling there, recognized the eminent soldier, and hastily began to make her departure, thinking that one so prominent would resent her presence. "Remain!" said the Marshall. "We are all equal here."

No matter how great our other differences, at the Lord's Table we are all on one level of need. We all need Christ! And what Christ can do for one man—He can do for all men. World Communion Sunday is a demonstration of the fact that Christ does not appeal to one small segment of humanity, but to men everywhere. Truly did He say, "And I, if I be lifted up . . . , will draw all men unto me." The reason that all men have not already been drawn to Him lies not in the Saviour, but in the fact that we have not adequately lifted Him up!

One in Christ

On World Communion Sunday I remember, also, that we are all one in Christ.

He said to His disciples, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." As I sip the grape juice on this day, this fruit of the vine reminds me of Christ's teaching. I recall that the branches are alive only because they are still part of the vine. If they are severed from it, they die. The vine is also the place where the branches *come together. And the closer the branches are to the vine, the closer they are to one another.*

When we Christians take communion, the closer we are to the spirit of Christ the closer we are to each other! As we draw near to Him, we draw nearer to our fellow man. This is also deeply significant for the local church. Perhaps there have been rifts and divisions in the membership. There may be long-smouldering resentments which hamper the work. World Communion Sunday, by emphasizing the one-ness of Christians everywhere, reminds us that we are truly "members of one body." Jealousies, grudges, and petty animosities among us are therefore out of harmony with the spirit of Him who is at the center of the Holy Communion.

When we feel our one-ness with other Christians around the world, our own faith is strengthened. We realize how far we are from being alone in the battle to gain a better world. There is a story of a family that lived in a cabin on the edge of the forest. In this family was a little boy. One day his mother was so busy washing and ironing that she did not notice he had raised the latch on the back door and wandered off into the woods. Discovering his absence, she frantically called her husband. When they could not find him, she called the neighbours. After many hours, several hundred people had joined in the search, but to no avail.

At last, it was suggested that all the searchers link their hands together and walk through the woods in a human chain. So, with joined hands, they made a sweep through one part of the forest and then another until the boy was found. He had fallen into a deep ditch and there had died before help could come. When they laid his lifeless form into his mother's arms, she cried out, "Why didn't you join hands sooner?"

That sentence also speaks straight to Christendom's need. Today there is still a tragic division among us. Although we have made much progress, there are still denominational rivalries and divisions which cripple our efforts to reach the lost for Christ. World Communion Day, as it finds its way into more and more churches, is one meaningful step toward a greater sense of unity and co-operation.

Christ Present Everywhere

Finally, World Communion Sunday reminds us that Christ is truly present with Christians everywhere!

As we partake of the symbols of His body and blood, we sense afresh the reality of His Presence. He is "God with us, for guidance, for comfort, and for strength."

An atheist wrote on a schoolroom board: "God is nowhere!" A Christian said, "You have all the letters, but you have it spaced wrongly. It should be: 'God is now here!' " When we take communion, we feel deeply that "God is now here."

On World Communion Sunday, when we realize that our brothers of other races and other lands and other churches are also partaking of the sacrament, we recognize anew the omnipresence of Christ. He is truly everywhere, which means that He is with us! "Lo, I am with you alway."

This Local Church Obtains Outstanding Results Through Its

EXPERIMENT IN FRIENDSHIP

by Myra Johnson
Publicity Chairman
First Church Methodist
Boise, Idaho

A PROJECT begun two years ago has brought great happiness to the congregation of the First Church Methodist in Boise, Idaho. It is the Good Neighbor Plan. Designed to make all members in each neighborhood in the city better acquainted with one another, it has accomplished much more.

The Sunday following a recent dinner in members' homes, the church sanctuary was filled to overflowing for the morning worship services. This showed that the plan made the church members more conscious of attending each Sunday.

In addition, it has brought cheer and the word of God to the homes of those who are ill or lonely. It has likewise provided information concerning worthwhile activities in the church.

Neighborhood Leaders

The plan was begun about two years ago with Mrs. Kenneth Dukes as chairman. She and the Rev. Meredith R. Groves, one of the church's ministers, worked long hours charting the city and its outlying districts. The area was divided into 32 neighborhoods, and a leader was named in each. She was given the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the First Church members in her area. When a new member moved in, or when some of the present residents joined the church, she called on them and made them feel at home. The woman was asked to join the WSCS circle in that area. The husband was invited to Methodist Men. The children were asked to join the choirs and the young people's groups. All were asked to attend church school.

The fulfillment of the plan made the neighborhood leaders more aware of those who came and went in their areas. They approached new residents who had no church affiliation and invited them to attend First Church. A finer feeling of "neighborliness" was thus developed in the districts.

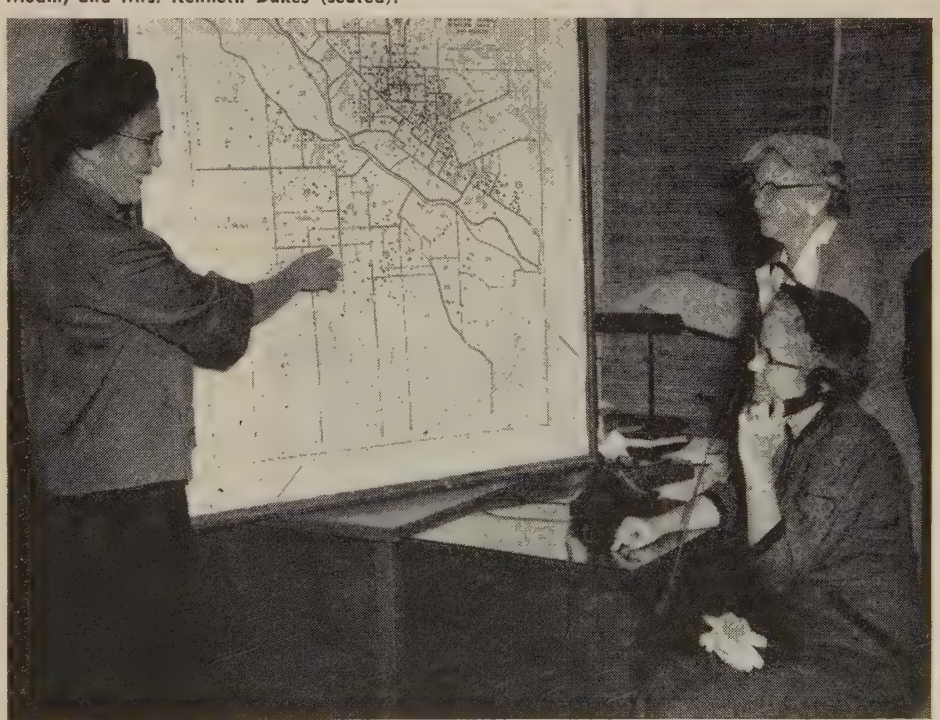
When Mrs. Dukes resigned as chairman, the work had grown so much and the project had become so big that two co-chairmen succeeded her. They are Mrs. Ted Hardy and Mrs. Andrew Modin, who immediately planned as their first project an all-member dinner.

Since the church social rooms could not accommodate all who would attend, the no-host dinners were held in homes throughout the city. Nearly 50 homes were thrown open one evening for the first Good Neighbor dinner, which attracted from 10 to 25 persons in each home. The planned pot-luck affair was climaxed with a radio program and one on television. The church purchased five minutes of time on both radio and TV; and Dr. Herbert E. Richards, minister, greeted the members at the dinners, saying that good neighborliness must begin in such small groups if it is to be realized around the world. The church office was swamped the following day with calls from members applauding the dinner idea. The pews were filled at the services on the following Sunday.

Plans

While it is hoped that the mass dinner will be an annual affair, the neighborhood leaders continue each week to make friendly contacts for the church. This winter each arranged a morning "coffee" in her home and invited the Methodist women in her neighborhood. It is such small and frequent contacts that make the plan the big success it continues to be.

Leaders of the Good Neighbor plan at First Church Methodist, Boise, Idaho, look at the map of the city divided into 32 neighborhoods for their work. Left to right are Mrs. Ted Hardy, Mrs. Andrew Modin, and Mrs. Kenneth Dukes (seated).



The Committee of the Month

by

Mrs. R. C. McIntyre

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

IT is fun to be chairman of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism in our big church, which is nearing the 3,000 membership mark! With that figure in mind, one might be expected to hesitate before accepting the job as Commission chairman. But, never fear! It is simple if you adopt a "Committee of the Month" system!

The seed for this idea was planted when our good, hard-working chairman of the last few years turned over the reins with a sigh and the noble words, "You should have a committee for every month."

That did it! We set about doing that very thing. How did we get the chairmen?

At the very first meeting, we asked for volunteers; and, in practically no time at all, we had a new "set up" which has proved a "boom" to the whole Commission because we have so many people vitally interested. Each chairman has a real responsibility and each "Committee of the Month" has a definite purpose in our church.

We have 65 families represented on our Commission (many are husband-and-wife combinations) and more are added each month. After one group of new members was received into the church, six of them became members of our group because they liked the friendly spirit which prevailed. We love that kind of contagion!

At first, with so many involved, it took time to "get in gear" and know what everyone else was doing. But now our "machinery" is well "oiled," and we feel that we have a "job for everyone and everyone on the job!" We meet the first Wednesday evening of every month regardless of rain, snow, hail, or sleet! (And South Dakota is capable of all that!)

Accurate Records

Before our stated meeting the Commission chairman calls each month's chairman and mentions interesting things "that will come up this month." She, in turn, calls together her committee and passes the enthusiasm along. The associate pastor, Rev. George Witthaus, is our "guiding light." With the help of one of our members (an efficient typist), he prepares on cards a list of names, with duplicates. These are given to the members at the monthly meeting, and the calling starts.

There is a wonderful vice-chairman, always ready to assist or take over; an efficient secretary, who is always "on the beam"; and a card-file chairman, who is a much-needed officer in such a set-up. This latter officer knows who is calling on whom as well as the results of the call. After the class is taken into the church, she clears her file. However, she carries over names to be called on later, takes out those not interested, and removes the names of those who have moved away. She spends hours at the telephone!

On alternating months we have a series of two meetings with the folks who desire membership. On the Sunday following these meetings we extend the invitation to unite with the church at the close of the morning worship service.

Our monthly chairmen stand inside the chancel with our two pastors, ready to accept the people with whom they have become acquainted through the visitation and the meetings. Thus, those joining need not feel like strangers.

One might wonder what kind of program takes place at the series of meetings with the members-to-be. These meetings are really delightful! Rev. Henry Lewis gives the history of Methodism at the first session. At the second session, he shows colored slides (photography is his hobby!) of our church at work. This gives the newcomer some idea of what groups he might like to be a part.

Mr. Witthaus gives each guest a card to sign and asks each to check activities in which he would like to take part. The secretary and a committee follow up on these cards and help each new member to find a place in his new church home. This way the new members find jobs of ushering, singing in the choir, etc.

The youth secretary explains the work for which she has responsibility, and the finance secretary explains the financial obligation that should be accepted by new members.

We introduce our efficient church secretaries and our preachers' wives (we're proud of them, too!) Our meeting ends each time with a social hour.

After the class joins, Mr. Lewis takes a group picture, and the new members each receive one of these. The picture also appears in a church bulletin, along with the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the persons shown.

We have had fun working out this new "Committee of the Month" idea. At times we didn't know just exactly what we were doing but we knew we were merrily on our way! By now, we feel we know who is doing what. One thing we are sure of is that no one is overworked, and each individual enjoys his part in the work of the Commission.

A typical monthly meeting of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism of the First Methodist Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

This Church Meets the Challenge of a Great City

by Mrs. Harriett Wesley
Scott Methodist Church
Detroit, Michigan

Scott Methodist Church, Detroit, Michigan, Albert Clay, pastor, has the key to big city evangelism. Detroit is a throbbing, industrial city that carries with it all the needs for spiritual awakening. Amid its thronging millions of all manner of people is situated the Scott Methodist Church with a Commission on Membership and Evangelism well trained to cope with big city needs.

How does the program of evangelism work at Scott? Let us list it under a few headings:

Evangelism Through Transportation

Detroit is sprawling. Our membership extends throughout the metropolitan area. Because of distance and the high price of city transportation, our church school has suffered for the lack of proper attendance. To remedy this, a beautiful new bus has been purchased. It is a thrilling sight to see Mr. Eber Morrow, a fine young man who has dedicated his service to the piloting of his "chariot for Christ," drive up to the church twice per day on Sunday morning with his precious cargo of sprightly young souls.

Results? Our church school is bursting its walls.

Adults, too, are being evangelized through transportation. Car ownership in a motor city is a common thing. Scott members have always owned cars, but where to park them after getting to church was the big question. During the past year, a huge parking lot has been purchased, cinderized, and put into proper condition to encourage church attendance among the motor transit members.

Evangelism Through Telephone Survey

Our Commission on Membership and Evangelism invested $150.00 in a mere book. But how it is paying off in new members for the church. This costly book is a telephone directory which contains the city-wide listing of persons owning telephones. The directory is set up by streets. Three office telephones are used by the Commission in its attempt to contact 100 persons per day five days per week. These "telephone evangelists" are briefed and trained in their specific duties. A "two-by-two" visitation follow-up of these calls is the aim of the Commission, since prospects are located this way.

Evangelism Through the Printed Word

Scott is careful to keep a constant supply of free literature on the shelves in the church lobby for ready reading. Church tracts are circulated among the membership. These carry instructions to "read and pass on."

Preaching Evangelism is also emphasized, with good results, at Scott.

The Rural Revival

by

James Hankins

Director of Town and Country Work

Holston Conference

IT was true! The facts were staggering! Holston Conference had 494 "barren" churches in 1954! This left only 625 churches with one or more additions on profession in the 1953-54 Conference year. When a closer check was made, it was found that by far the majority of these "barren" churches were in town and country places and that most of them were circuit churches.

The United Evangelistic Mission had not reached the circuit churches. It had been geared to *charges, not churches.* Circuit pastors were asked to participate in the U.E.M. They were asked to enlist their churches. But, in most cases, only one guest pastor was assigned to the three-, four-, and five-point circuits. Accordingly, the individual churches were not reached.

The Plan

The Holston Conference Board of Evangelism and the Town and Country Commission set to work on a plan whereby a simultaneous revival could be held in all the churches on circuits with three or more churches. Plans were made for visitation evangelism and preaching services Sunday through Friday evenings. Pastors of station and two-point charges were asked to share in the project by giving two weeks of their time—one week in their own District and one in another District. A few out-of-Conference ministers were invited to help.

The idea was born in the Board of Evangelism meeting, developed in cooperation with the Town and Country Commission, approved by the Board of Missions and the Inter-Board Council, and adopted by the Annual Conference. The first three above-mentioned Boards provided initial financial resources. The staff of the General Board of Evangelism gave counsel and guidance in working out the pattern.

The Committees

As the plan developed, there were three over-all committees: the Conference Planning and Promotional Committee, the District Planning and Promotional Committee, and the Local Church Commission on Membership and Evangelism. The Conference Committee was responsible for setting up the policies and plan for the revival, working out the exchange of pastors, and developing a financial plan.

The responsibilities of the District Committee were to enlist the circuit churches, to develop the plan of the revival for the District, and to carry through the District financial arrangements. In addition, the District Committee determined what should be done in the way of publicity and appointed sub-district directors of preparation to assist the pastors and churches in preparing prospect lists, securing visitors, and arranging for visitation evangelism. Another important responsibility of the District Committee was to promote prayer groups among all the churches.

In the local church, the Commission on Membership and Evangelism was responsible for Spiritual Preparation, Publicity, and Visitation Evangelism. In small churches, it was suggested that the work could be done by one or two people on each committee.

Promotion

The Rural Revival was carried out in two phases. One phase was in November; the other, in March. This made it possible to secure most of the guest pastors from within the Conference. Of the 743 churches on circuits of three or more churches, 456 participated in the program.

Four major pieces of general promotional material were used. One of these was a mimeographed outline of plans for the over-all effort. A second piece was a reprint of sections of the master plan, relating to the local church, for use by the pastors and the Commissions on Membership and Evangelism. The other two were publicity pieces. One was a colorful brochure, beamed directly to the laity, with emphasis on the "What," "Why," "Where," and "Who." One was a four-color poster for the local churches.

The financial plan was simple. Each

In the above photo, a church team participates in two-by-two visitation evangelism on the farm in connection with the Rural Revival.

participating church was asked to share in three offerings. The first offering on Sunday night was used to defray the District and Conference expenses. The Thursday and Friday night offerings were designated for travel expenses and honoraria of both the host and guest pastors. After the expenses were paid, the remainder was divided equally among the host pastors and guest pastors as honoraria. It was an innovation to include the host pastors in the distribution of travel expense and honoraria.

Results

The two phases of the Revival produced a harvest of 1,212 persons making decisions. Of these, 1,039 were on profession of faith and vows and 173 were transfers. An additional 47 persons recorded rededication of their lives. There were 6,032 interviews made in the course of the visitation. All 12 Districts of the Conference, including 129 charges and 456 circuit churches, participated in the program. Several churches received new members for the first time in several years.

Reports from 11 of the 12 Districts participating indicate a total attendance of 101,395 at the preaching services.

Following the Revival, 108 of the 129 circuits had recorded decisions on profession of faith and vows.

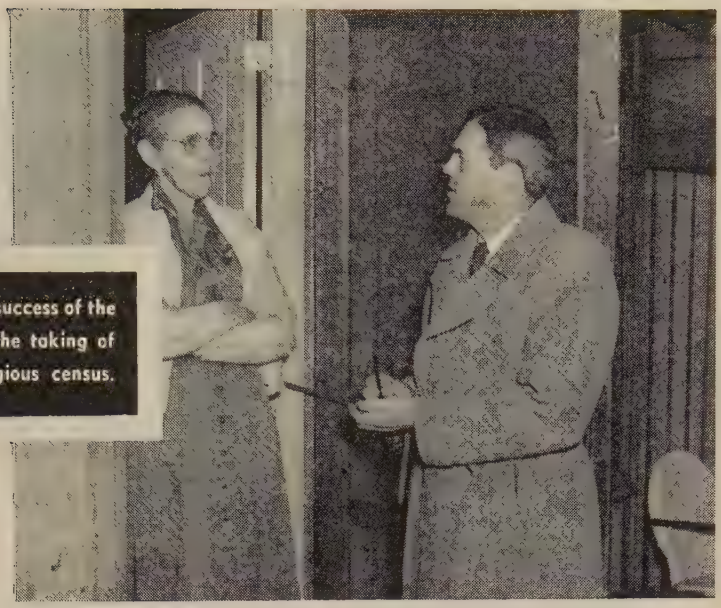
A survey is now under way to determine how many of the "barren" churches in 1954 have borne fruit as result of the Rural Revival. This study will also show the percentage of persons joining the Church on profession of faith.

A number of participating ministers have stated that the Rural Revival was the most challenging effort in which they had ever engaged.

Observations

Never in the history of Holston Conference has so great a simultaneous spiritual impact been made upon the small circuit churches. Many will receive members for the first time in many years. Some were completely transformed by this spiritual awakening. Midway Church, in the Morristown District, doubled its membership during the campaign. In some of the churches the revival continued into the second week as a result of the momentum of the movement.

The coming of guest ministers inspired local congregations to do a more thorough job of preparation in prayer, in seeking prospects, and in enlisting visitors. The concern of the Conference for the circuit churches and the min-



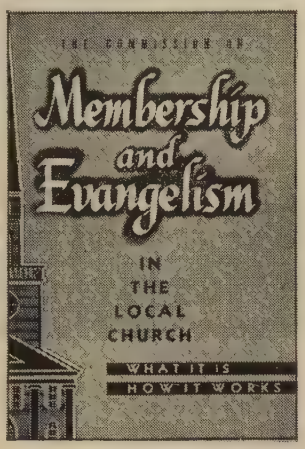
Important to the success of the Rural Revival is the taking of an accurate religious census.

Rural churches like this have received new life through the inspiration of the Rural Revival.

Effective in the spiritual development of the Rural Revival are prayer groups such as this.

Every

METHODIST CHURCH



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this practical manual

THE COMMISSION ON MEMBERSHIP AND EVANGELISM

in the Local Church

to every member
of its Commission

Provides
basic help in the basic work of the church

25¢ each; 5 or more, 20¢ each

TIDINGS

Headquarters for Evangelistic Materials

1908 Grand Avenue
Nashville 5, Tennessee

A local church Commission on Membership and Evangelism discusses its responsibilities in the Rural Revival and lays plans for conducting the program in its parish.

istry of the visiting preachers have elevated the rural church in the thinking of its members. This will have a continuing effect through the years. These churches have a new concept of Methodist connectionalism.

Gained Understanding

Guest pastors from station churches gained an understanding of some of the problems of the rural church and an appreciation of the significant place of the rural church in Methodism.

The major advantage of the Rural Revival pattern is that it reaches the individual church and pinpoints the responsibility of the local congregation for securing attendance and participation. This cannot be accomplished in a "charge" revival.

The community religious census revealed that in many of the rural charges there are few live prospects for membership. These communities are static and have been unaffected by the vast shifts in population across America. In numbers of circuits Methodist prospects number less than 10 per cent of the total membership. Few of these are persons who have not been interviewed several times before. This explains the high percentage of first decisions and the low pereentage of commitments in relation to interviews.

New Life

New life has been infused into our circuit churches. Their sights have been lifted. Their hearts have been warmed by this demonstration of concern and interest on the part of the larger churches. We believe something vital and significant has been initiated that will mean a new day for our rural churches.

According to the calendar, the Rural Revival has come to a close. But its effect and influence will be evidenced in the years ahead among the hills of Holston.

Shown here, members of a District Committee discuss ways and means for promoting the Rural Revival. Left to right are: Eugene E. Golay, staff member, General Board of Evangelism; W. P. Worley, District Secretary of Evangelism; James Hankins, Executive Director of Rural Revival; and J. W. Stone, Superintendent, Johnson City District.

GOOD NEWS

FLASHES . . . from the Field

ANOTHER 70—TWO BY TWO

Herschel Hedgepeth, pastor of St. Paul's Methodist Church, San Bernardino, California, reports that in that church's Visitation Evangelism, 70 men devoted their full or part time to the project. They contacted almost all of the list of prospects and brought 66 into membership on one Sunday. So great was the enthusiasm that those who failed to respond upon the first call were contacted again. The new members were trained by using the turnover chart, "Spiritual Life for Methodist Christians". . . Some of these also became lay visitors.

PRAYER LIFE MOVEMENT

Numerous Annual Conferences over America are arranging their own series of 24-hour prayer vigils for 1956. Vigils begin at 6 p.m., on one day, and continue until 6 p.m., the following day. Many are the expressions of appreciation of the great spiritual value for churches and individuals when they participate in a 24-hour prayer vigil.

A CHURCH ON HORSEBACK

At Sepulveda, California, a retired minister, Joseph Harris, 75, of Burbank, California, preaches each first and third Sunday of the month to a congregation on horseback. His hearers sing hymns, join in prayer, and hear his sermon as they sit astride their mounts in an open field. . . Idea originated with an eleven year old girl.

THEY COME AS THEY ARE

At an 8:30 a.m. service each Sunday in the West Corvina, California, church, the worshippers are invited to come in sport and beach clothes. . . Service seeks to attract families en route to the beaches.

BY ALL MEANS WIN SOME

The seven pastors of the Algona Sub-District in Iowa are conducting a new type of Visitation Evangelism. All meet on an agreed day in one of the churches. . . Ministers team with local laymen for visitation. . . A mass meeting is held in the evening. . . They report 28 professions of faith and 48 transfers and 26 baptized.

Please enter yearly subscriptions to SHEPHERDS, for members of our Commission, as follows:

Pastor—(Rev.) _____

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In the following form, which outlines the personnel of the Commission on Membership and Evangelism (see 1952 *Discipline*, ¶ 221), please fill in the names and correct mailing addresses of only the persons who are to receive *Shepherds*, according to the offer on the reverse side. Count the Pastor and the Chairman (above) in the number.

Ex Officio

Spiritual Life Secretary, W.S.C.S. _____

Address _____ City, Zone, State _____

Chairman, Commission on Missions _____

Address _____ City, Zone, State _____

Church School Superintendent _____

Address _____ City, Zone, State _____

Church Lay Leader _____

Address _____ City, Zone, State _____

President, Methodist Men _____

Address _____ City, Zone, State _____

Chairman, MYF Commission on Christian Witness _____

Address _____ City, Zone, State _____

Elected by Quarterly Conference

Layman _____

Address _____ City, Zone, State _____

Layman _____

Address _____ City, Zone, State _____

Woman _____

Address _____ City, Zone, State _____

Woman _____

Address _____ City, Zone, State _____

Young Person _____

Address _____ City, Zone, State _____

Young Person _____

Address _____ City, Zone, State _____

Others to receive *Shepherds*, if any

Name _____

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PLEASE FILL IN (on both sides) AND MAIL AT ONCE TO TIDINGS, 1908 Grand Avenue, Nashville 5, Tennessee

HOW TO CREATE
An Evangelistic Atmosphere

by A. C. Archibald
Ohio Baptist Convention Secretary

PASTORS ARE ASKING, "How can I create an evangelistic atmosphere in my church?" Every true church of Christ must always major on evangelism. And yet in some of our churches the very word evangelism is disliked. How may we go about creating an evangelistic atmosphere where it is lacking? Surely, we cannot expect souls to be born again in a frigid anti-evangelistic atmosphere.

Atmosphere is requirement number one. The horticulturist, with utmost care, provides his plants with just the temperature they require. To attempt evangelism, even by most effective methods, in a church that has no evangelistic atmosphere is as futile as to attempt the growing of date palms at the North Pole.

The ultimate achievements in our evangelism will not be measured in terms of organization, leadership, or literature, but in our ability to create in the local church, large or small, city or rural, a genuine atmosphere of soul-winning.

How can an evangelistic atmosphere be produced?

Importance of the Pastor

1. The pastor stands in the key position. He must prayerfully, humbly, and sacrificially accept it as his responsibility to produce an evangelistic atmosphere. No other individual can change the atmosphere of his church. To say, "My church is not evangelistically disposed," is no justification for leaving it so. Churches can be changed. The test of a minister's value to his congregation lies largely in his ability to reconstruct the thinking and attitudes of his group. It may cost him much. If he is unwilling to pay a price, he forfeits his claim to leadership. A true minister reconstructs his church, when this is needed.

A great mid-west church, with a million dollar plant, in recent years has undergone a transformation. Every physical appurtenance of its building suggests social position, the temptation to contentment, self-satisfaction, apartness. But the pastor took fire, and his flame was a pilot flame that set other fires burning in his congregation. This changed church went out and in one week of Visitation Evangelism won over 150 people to Christ and the Church. A fresh interpretation and application of what Paul had in mind when he said, "That I may save some," can save the modern church.

2. How can a pastor take a church that has lost its vision and passion for souls and so reconstruct its life that there will be out-reach, up-reach, and down-reach for the souls of men until such an attitude becomes the normal expression of the church life?

(a) Begin by putting evangelism first in the church program. Evangelism will live in first place, or it will live only feebly, if at all.

Without the evangelistic emphasis in the pulpit, there will never be any in the pew. Unless pastors are willing to preach for souls, earnestly, passionately, winsomely, our laymen will never experience the evangelistic desire or impulse.

(b) Negatively, there are some things that will not produce the evangelistic atmosphere. It cannot be done by turning pulpits into forums of theological debate. Correct creedal belief is not evangelistic passion. Creedal discussion may divert a church from its central task and leave only hardness that hurts the spirit of unity, warmth, and sweetness, so vital to soul winning.

Nor is the evangelistic atmosphere nourished in any church by making the pulpit a platform for ceaseless discussion of divers social, political, and international issues. Neither is the atmosphere of evangelism stimulated by eliminating the things within the church that foster the spiritual growth of people, such as the services of prayer, Bible study, and devotions.

(c) The church that would recover the evangelistic atmosphere must maintain within her life those agencies which feed the evangelistic spirit. The prayer meeting in many churches became moribund; so it was killed. By hard work, fresh thinking, and new approaches, it might have been saved. But neither pastor nor people would pay the price. So it died. And when it died, one of our major agencies to undergird the spirit of evangelism perished. With the dying out of the prayer meeting, the prayer emphasis in all our organizations declined.

Need for Prayer

Put prayer back in the heart of the church program. Let it again make its demand upon the time, strength, and devotion of our people. One of our churches in New England a few years ago discovered it had lost, somewhere along the way, all zeal and interest in the redemption of men. The prayer meeting had died. A young minister came to the field. He began by reorganizing the mid-week service. He set up the kind of service that had no precedent, but was deeply devotional and spirit-feeding. He boldly challenged his people to pray. The atmosphere in his church was completely changed. Today it is one of our most fruitful evangelistic churches.

(d) *Build into the life of a church the doctrinal basis for evangelistic conviction and action.* Evangelistic churches are created out of evangelistic truths. There is a definite body of gospel truth whose impact may be termed evangelistic. Should a church fail to have those truths imbedded in its thinking and feeling, it will inevitably fail of the evangelistic atmosphere. True evangelism in a church is the product of the preaching of the great central truths of the gospel.

Dr. John English used to tell his Newton students, "Gentlemen, preach the great central truths of the gospel; they will make you great preachers and your churches life-saving institutions." Is not the failure of the evangelistic atmosphere in many of our churches the product of preaching only on peripheral truths?

What are *the evangelistic truths of our gospel*—such as will arouse conscience, quicken responsibility, and stir

the will to action? There is the Being of God: His character and His purpose. Yet a middle-aged preacher said to me, "I have never preached on God. I have preached about Him and His work, but never on Him." Then there is Man and his deep necessities: his sin, his helplessness, his sorrows, his total inadequacy when left alone. There is the "person of Jesus": His passionate concern for men, His purpose in coming, His devotion to salvation that produced the Cross. There is the work and mission of the Holy Spirit in conversion, regeneration, upbuilding. There is the eternal truth of the part man has in his own salvation, and the vast incompleteness of human personality without Christ. There is also the emphasis upon the destiny of mankind.

3. The evangelistic atmosphere can be cultivated by publicly and frequently explaining how one can begin the Christian life and enter into the fellowship of the Church. That may involve merely an invitation to meet the pastor at the close of worship; but *repeated* it keeps the sense of expectancy toward the unsaved before the people. Should not every church make it known at every service on Sunday that the door is open for all who may wish to enter?

Make much of the frequent presentation of evangelistic truths in the Sunday church school. If the children and youth catch an expectancy toward the necessity of decision, later in maturity they will support the evangelistic appeal in the church itself.

Meetings for Prayer

The evangelistic atmosphere may also be enriched by the appointment of special meetings to pray for the unchurched of the community. We tend in our interest to follow the leading of our prayers.

While there may be much difference in interpretation of doctrines, there is no difference among us regarding the vital necessity of all men coming to God through Christ. Christ is our gospel. Our gospel is not primarily the preaching of hell, judgment, condemnation. It is first of all a proclamation of *Good News*.

I entered a large church in the midwest one Sunday evening. It was a beautiful church, architecturally. A glorious choir led the singing. The whole atmosphere was shot through and through with the spirit of evangelism. The pastor was preaching from his heart. His topic was "The Insistence of the Savior" or "The Seeking Christ."

At the close of the service he appealed to any who might wish to walk the ways of life with Christ to enter a little room at the rear. Six mature people went in. As I went out a gentleman, whom I found to be a commercial traveler, said to me, "I hope your heart was with us. It is a lovely sight to see people turning to God." He went on to say, "It has been my ambition now for two years to win a soul to my Lord each week."

That church was a veritable runway for souls into a new life. It was the first and supreme thing in that church. The atmosphere was there. Thank God there are yet such churches; yet such preachers; yet such laymen.

The Methodist Series

of the Protestant Hour

THEME: "Christ, the Hope of the World"

August 7—"His Strange Secret"
August 14—"His Magnetic Call"
August 21—"His Creative Faith"
August 28—"His Redemptive Concern"
September 4—"His Ultimate Victory"
September 11—"His Enduring Presence"

Sermons by Dr. Eugene M. Frank, pastor
First Methodist Church, Topeka, Kansas

This series began June 26 and has featured the following ministers: Dr. W. Cliff Newman; Dr. Joseph S. Johnston; Dr. Paul Hardin, Jr.; Dr. J. Wallace Hamilton; Dr. Charles P. Bowles; and Dr. Charles L. Allen. *Shepherds* regrets that it did not receive this information in time for earlier publication.

Every Sunday since January 1, 1946, a 30-minute religious radio broadcast has been presented by one of the cooperating denominational groups now producing the Protestant Hour.

This means that 495 Sunday morning religious radio programs have been aired by the cooperating radio stations. Every one of these has been a free—public service—broadcast.

The first Methodist Hour was presented February 17, 1946, over 39 stations. This summer 290 radio stations will air these programs in the United States and nearby island possessions.

The first broadcast was presented from the borrowed studios of WSB, Atlanta, Georgia. Today the programs are produced in the beautiful Martha and Arthur J. Moore Chapel Studio in the new $325,000.00 Protestant Radio and Television Center adjacent to the campus of Emory University.

THE METHODIST SERIES—THE PROTESTANT HOUR

Is presented by the Radio and Film Commission of the South Central Jurisdiction and the Radio Committee of the Southeastern Jurisdictional Council and is a production of

The Joint Radio Committee, The Methodist Church
404-408 Wesley Memorial Building
63 Auburn Avenue, N.E. Atlanta 3, Georgia

This Board of Stewards

VISITS FOR CHRIST

by Dana Dawson, Jr.
Former Pastor, Munholland Memorial Methodist Church
New Orleans, Louisiana

JESUS sent his disciples out two by two to win converts to the Kingdom. If this method was good enough for Christ, it should be good enough for stewards in The Methodist Church today!

Every steward of the Munholland Memorial Methodist Church is also an elected member of the Visitation Evangelism Committee. No new steward is added to the Official Board unless he has participated in this program and promises to do this work regularly. Thus, each steward is on the Board because of his desire to work for the advancement of God's Kingdom. Age or station in life are not important, but only the willingness to serve. Thus, unemployed men have worked with others who are presidents of their companies or in high executive positions. They work together effectively because of the motivating desire they hold in common to win souls to Christ.

Finding Prospects

The visitation group meets on Sunday afternoon once a month. The main reason for choosing the afternoon period is that each team can work six or eight prospect cards. When visiting is done at night, it is possible to see only two or three families. It is also easier to find house numbers in daylight, and experience has proved that in this area more people are at home on Sunday afternoon than at any other time.

Most of the prospects come from the morning service of worship. Each Sunday morning before the offertory, the ushers distribute Attendance Registration Cards. The pastor welcomes visitors to the service and invites them to fill out the cards and place them in the collection plate. Other prospects come through the Sunday school, religious surveys, subscription to the hostess service, etc. The supply of prospects has never been exhausted even though the cards have been worked regularly at least once a month for six years.

Phenomenal Results

Prayer is always the first order of business when the stewards come together for Visitation Evangelism. After instruction, each man gets a partner, prospect cards, commitment cards, a city map, and a "sorry we missed you" card to leave at the house if the prospects are not at home. It has proved to be more effective to use only men for this work.

The results of this plan have been phenomenal. The church has led the New Orleans District in the number of new members received every year for the last five years. In fact it is possible to predict and determine the number of new members who will be received in the course of a year. The new members are in direct ratio to the number of prospects visited.

The most difficult task in the evangelism program is assimilating the new members after they have been received. A steward and his family are assigned as sponsors for each new family coming into the church. The sponsors strive to make the new members feel at home and interest them in participating in the full program of the church. In addition, the membership is divided into blocks. Each new family's name is given to the Block Leader of that neighborhood. The Block Leaders visit them with the particular responsibility of keeping them regular in their attendance at Sunday school and church.

As a result of the program of Visitation Evangelism, the Board of Stewards is characterized by a spirit of brotherhood and cooperation. Their spirit of Christian service has permeated the entire program of the church.

Most Important Function

Obviously, the program of Visitation Evangelism is the most important function in the work of our church. The success of the church spiritually, financially, and numerically, as well as in its building programs, is directly traceable to the success of the Visitation Evangelism work.

Our stewards know why Christ sent the disciples out two by two to win converts to the Kingdom of God. Christ's method still works today!

Shown in the photograph above are the stewards of Munholland Memorial Methodist Church. These men meet once a month for two-by-two visitation.

Since God Answers Prayer . . .

by

Fred Cloud

Assistant Editor of Youth Publications

Methodist Board of Education

PRAYER is as essential to the life of the soul as is breathing to the life of the body. If we are to have a healthy spiritual life, we must have frequent, regular periods of prayer. Prayer is not just "for special occasions." It is the proper response of Christians to every circumstance that might arise. As the Apostle Paul urges, *"In everything* by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

Perhaps most Christians will agree with the assertions made in the paragraph above. Many books have been written about the importance of prayer in the Christian life. We would go further and say that prayer is not something we practice as a type of spiritual gymnastics, just to keep our souls "in shape." Along with the psalmists, we believe that God actually hears—and answers—prayer.

The thought that makes Christians pause and meditate, therefore, is not *"if* God answers prayer," but *"since* God answers prayer, what should I do?"

Consequences of Answered Prayer

Four consequences of the great fact of answered prayer occur to me. Other ideas, perhaps, will occur to you as you read this article and reflect on its theme.

1. Since God answers prayer, *I must be sincere in my petitions.* I must really want what I pray for. "Hear my cry, O God, listen to my prayer." If I pray that the day of brotherhood may speedily come, I may not hold on to prejudices that are partially blocking its coming. To be sincere, a prayer must express the desire of the whole self, not just the "better self." I must be willing to let go of practices that are out of line with the state of existence for which I pray.

2. Since God answers prayer, *I must seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in determining what I should pray for.* Some concerns that should be the objects of prayer seem fairly obvious: food for the hungry, knowledge for the ignorant, healing for the sick, guidance for rulers, and a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ for all men. But, in addition to these concerns, there are many highly complex situations in which one hardly knows what to pray, except that God's will be done. We need the mind of Christ to pray as we ought.

Two-Way Commission

This brings us to the realization that prayer is two-way communion: God with man and man with God. We are so prone to talk and act that we find it hard to "be still and know" that God is—and to discover His will more perfectly as we listen in silence.

3. Since God answers prayer, *I must learn to recognize God's answers to my prayers.* Many times we wake up to the realization that our prayers have been answered, and we are surprised. Perhaps this measure of surprise is an indication of our lack of faith that answers would be forthcoming. Or perhaps it shows our lack of gratitude to God.

Consider a few examples that are common experience: our loved one recovers from an illness; the person of our choice consents to marry us; the job for which our talents fit us is given to us. Do we recognize these facts as God's "Yes" to our prayers? If we do, our spontaneous reaction will be praise and thanksgiving. If we do not, we need to reflect on our experiences with the eyes of faith.

No wise parent always says "Yes" to his child's requests. We need to learn to recognize that sometimes God has answered "No." "No" is sometimes a kinder answer than "Yes"—when that which is wanted would prove harmful. As children of God, we discover that His providence is always good, although not always easily understood, nor easily accepted. This leads us to the final point.

4. Since God answers prayer, *I must seek the grace to accept His answers to my prayers in faith and trust.* No one can explain fully the problem of evil and especially the problem of innocent suffering. "Why did my child die? Why was my husband taken in mid-life? Why did this misfortune happen to me?" Many persons have prayed sincerely and in faith, and apparently their prayers were to no avail.

At this point, especially, it is tremendously important to remind ourselves that prayer is not incantation and that religion is not magic. Prayer is no trick or gimmick for insuring the results that we as human beings want. God is not a cosmic bellhop who can be summoned to do our bidding by the simple expedient of "saying a prayer." Rather, prayer is itself an expression of faith. It is an encounter between creature and Creator, between spirit and Spirit. The deepest form of prayer is that in which the person praying seeks to conform his will to the will of God.

Need for Acceptance

That is not easy. In fact, it was hard even for Jesus. Remember his sweat of agony when he prayed in the garden of Gethsemane. In the garden, Jesus demonstrated what we need, what we must seek: willingness to accept God's answer to prayer in faith and trust—even when that answer means suffering and death. Such acceptance is not "natural." It is possible only as the grace of God is operative in our lives.

"Since God answers prayer. . . ." I must take my prayer life seriously, recognizing that it is the highest activity of my whole being.

THE ARCTIC PRAYER CIRCLE

by Walter E. Mischke
Superintendent, Paris District
Memphis Annual Conference

Ward Wells Photo

How the Alaska Methodist College Prayer Fellowship Began

THE morning of April 22, 1955, marked the beginning of a remarkable experience in the lives of 36 District Superintendents and other Methodist leaders who met together in Seattle's First Methodist Church and received their initial briefing on the proposed Alaska Methodist College at Anchorage.

They had come from almost every state in the nation on the invitation of Dr. P. Gordon Gould and Dr. H. L. Johns of the Division of National Missions, the Board of Missions. All had been previously designated representatives of their respective areas by their Bishops' appointment.

Instruction and Discussion

After a busy day of instruction and discussion at First Church, the group was entertained for dinner at the University Church. The evening closed significantly with a crossed-arms and clasped-hands prayer circle at the altar of the church. Each man took part in the prayer for the success of the mission. Perhaps this was the time when the Holy Spirit put the idea of a prayer circle and a prayer fellowship in the minds of the men.

The next day, April 23, the group boarded the plane for Anchorage—a trip of 1,500 miles. On the plane, some of the members fell into a discussion of a prayer fellowship for the Alaska Methodist College, and preliminary plans for a fellowship were made.

At 11:00 o'clock, Dr. Johns led the group in a "chapel-in-the-sky" service with songs, silent prayer, scripture, and the Lord's Prayer. This experience made a profound impression upon all and was often referred to in the days that followed. The prayer fellowship was rapidly taking definite form.

The entire day, April 24, was spent in study and discussion. That evening there was a meeting with the citizens of Anchorage for the team assignments and first solicitation period of the Anchorage campaign for $500,000 for the college. (The drive produced almost $700,000.) It was a great meeting. The workers came and came until all the seats in the auditorium were taken, and workers were standing around the walls.

One of the local leaders, welcoming the gathering, said, "I don't pray often, but I want you to know I prayed for this meeting tonight, and God has wonderfully answered my prayers." This layman's feeling that the task of building the Alaska Methodist College was too big for human strength alone, and his desire for God's help, expressed the thought of all who have been and are now connected with the drive for the college.

The next day the college site was visited, where a prayer circle was formed. This was a point of vision and consecration. The group clasped hands and prayed for the college and for the youth of Alaska, as well as dedicating themselves to God's service in the interest of the college. As they prayed together, they were blessed of God and felt the presence and power of His Spirit in their hearts.

Others May Join

Out of this Alaskan "Upper Room" prayer experience have come plans for the Alaska Methodist College Prayer Fellowship. Prayer groups and circles are to be organized throughout the nation in each Area, Conference, District, and local church. One of the first groups to be organized is the Arctic Prayer Circle, made up of those who gathered for the first prayer fellowship at the site of the college. The Arctic Prayer Circle will pray at 10:00 o'clock each morning wherever the members are (10:00 A.M. being the hour of the "chapel-in-the-sky" on the plane to Alaska). Other circles and groups may join the "Arctic Circle" hour or include the Alaska Methodist College in their prayers at whatever hour desired.

By joining the Alaska Methodist College Prayer Fellowship, one has the opportunity of extending the horizons of intercessory prayer, of enlarging the bounds of prayer fellowship, and of laboring with God in a very real way in building a Christian college in Alaska.

Shown above is the prayer circle made up of 36 Methodists from 32 of the 37 episcopal areas. The "Arctic Circle" group developed from this experience at the site of the proposed Alaska Methodist College at Anchorage.

Pastors' Schools of Evangelism

by Lawrence F. Hawley

Director, Conference Schools of Evangelism
Southern California-Arizona Conference
and
Minister, First Methodist Church
Montebello, California

IN February, 1955, the Southern California-Arizona Conference came to one of the most important phases in its program of evangelism for the Conference year—the conducting of the Pastors' Training Schools of Evangelism. Two such Schools were held within the Conference: one at the Trinity Methodist Church, Pomona, February 8 to 11, for the Southern California section of the Conference; the other at St. John's Methodist Church, Tucson, Arizona, February 15 to 18, for the Arizona section of the Conference.

Unique Features

Two features of the Schools made them unique. In the first place, the Schools were located in areas where it would be possible to devote afternoons and evenings to actual field work. Ministers from the Southern California section spent afternoons in taking religious censuses in the growing areas occupied by the West Covina Methodist Church, the Philadelphia Street Community Methodist Church (Pomona), and the Puente Community Methodist Church (Puente).

Religious Censuses

In the Arizona School, religious censuses were taken in the afternoon in the areas occupied by the St. John's Methodist Church, Pueblo Gardens Methodist Church, and Hope Methodist Church, all of Tucson.

The second unique aspect of the Pastors' Schools was the provision for the participation of laymen in visitation evangelism each evening. This was done in the same areas where the religious censuses had been taken in the afternoons.

The results are noteworthy. In the Southern California School, a total of 976 religious census calls revealed 380 prospective Methodist families. Visitation resulted in 63 decisions, 39 of which were on profession of faith. In the Arizona School, the census calling revealed 186 Methodist family prospects, representing 669 people. Visitation resulted in 68 decisions, with 36 of these on profession of faith.

Leaders

The program for the two Schools was arranged and worked out by the Director of the Schools of Evangelism who, in turn presided over the Pomona School. The Tucson School was presided over by Rev. Edward Erny, Director of Evangelism for the Conference. Others participating in the School at Pomona were Rev. John W. Black, host pastor; Dr. Fletcher Scharer, Superintendent, San Bernardino District; Rev. Edward Erny; and Rev. Byron Deschler, Chairman, Conference Board of Evangelism. Additional participants in the Tucson School included Rev. Clarence R. Wagner, Superintendent, Arizona District; Rev. Erny; and the host pastor of St. John's Methodist Church, Rev. Henry W. Nollsch.

Above, ministers attending the Conference School of Evangelism at St. John's Methodist Church, Tucson, Arizona, February 15-18, 1955.

Left, ministers attending the Conference School of Evangelism at Trinity Methodist Church, Pomona, California, February 8-11, 1955.

A group of young people gathered for an Easter service in the Perth District, Australia.

The Centennial Year of Methodism in the Australia-New Zealand Churches

The New Zealand and Australian churches are in their centennial year of Methodism. "The Missions in Australia, Van Dieman's Land, the Friendly Isles and Feejee" were set up by the British Conference of 1854. It was "a district connexion" and was called "the Australasian Wesleyan-Methodist Connexion." The first annual conference was held in Sydney, Australia, in 1855. New Zealand was included within its boundaries.

Before this time, just as in our country before 1784, these islands had been a mission of the British Wesleyan Conference. At this time the new conference took over responsibility for the mission work in this part of the world. Therefore, they are celebrating a hundred years of missionary activity.

During the course of the century, "The Methodist Missions became the largest in the Pacific and no story of missionary transformation is more satisfying." One hears much talk in this part of the world of Tonga, Fiji, the Solomons, and other Pacific islands. These places really come alive. A new mission field in Southeast Asia is the latest field to be occupied.

In 1913, the New Zealand Conference separated from the Australia Conference. Both the New Zealand and Australian churches entered into their Crusades for Christ following the Crusade for Christ in America. They have been significant movements. The Crusade for Christ is still on in New Zealand and the Crusade in 1955 is called "A Year of Consolidation and Preparation for Community Year." In Australia the Crusade for Christ was followed by the "Mission to the Nation" with Dr. Allan Walker as director. It has been a great movement.

Dr. Roy L. Smith has recently been in New Zealand and Australia and has taken part in both movements. He made a deep impression on each country and rendered service to both movements, especially the youth movements. He delivered lectures to the 3,000 youth gathered in the great youth conference in Sydney. On the closing day he addressed 15,000 people.

In March and April, Bishop Ivan Lee Holt, president of the World Methodist Council, and Dr. J. Manning Potts, editor of The Upper Room, visited the centers of New Zealand and Australia. Everywhere the leaders and people were most cordial. They addressed Methodist preachers in synods and other gatherings. They preached in the pulpits, spoke over the radio, and visited with groups and in homes. There were interchurch meetings and they were royally received and found these friends to be "brethren" in every respect.

Everywhere were found readers of The Upper Room. The Australian edition was started by the Crusade for Christ in Australia, and it is edited by the Rev. E. Keith Ditterich. This is the edition used throughout New Zealand, Australia and the Australasian islands.

When Dr. Roy L. Smith was traveling in New Zealand, he and the Rev. L. Greenslade, chairman of the Spiritual Life Committee, had some conversations in reference to the possibility of bringing some ministers from America to New Zealand to have some United Evangelistic Missions in 1956. These conversations had been followed by some correspondence between Mr. Greenslade and Dr. Harry Denman, executive secretary, General Board of Evangelism, relative to the matter.

These conversations were followed up by Bishop Holt and Dr. Potts with the New Zealand leaders of the committee—the Rev. Mr. Greenslade; the Rev. Mr. Hailwood, president of the Conference; the Rev. Mr. Laurenson; and the Rev. Mr. Chrystall. Discussions took place as to the possibility of such missions, the type of missions, time, arrangements for entertainment, etc.

As a result of this, the Board of Evangelism has been invited to have some demonstration missions. It is hoped these may be arranged for July and August, 1957. Probably three or four cities might be selected as centers and the preachers and people would cooperate in those. No details have as yet been worked out for the missions, but they were discussed in several synods and the reaction to them was most kindly and graciously received.

New Zealand is already doing some things in the field of visitation evangelism but they seem anxious for the contacts that would come from working together with the Americans in this field. There is a possibility that some missions may also be held in Australia.

Left, a group of ministers representing several denominations are shown at the Nelson Methodist Church, New Zealand.

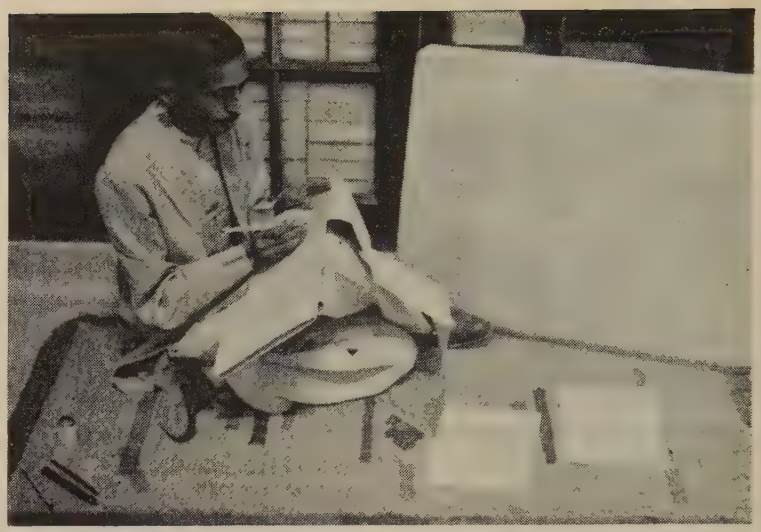
UNITING THE WORLD

Through

FAMILY DEVOTIONS

THAT THOSE who use THE UPPER ROOM for family devotions are part of an ever increasing world-wide fellowship may be seen by these pictures. By the time this article is in print, two more other language editions will have been added to THE UPPER ROOM, bringing to 31 the number of editions in which THE UPPER ROOM is published. Except for the Spanish edition, the other language editions are published outside the United States.

Dr. J. Manning Potts, editor of THE UPPER ROOM, recently visited some of the places where these other language editions are being published. These pictures were taken during this tour.

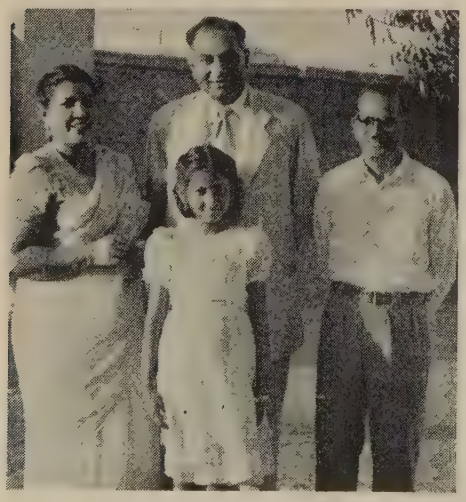


The Urdu edition is published in the official "Persian Script" of Pakistan. Here we see the preparation of a manuscript copy of *The Upper Room*. Later it will be reproduced from plates made from this copy.

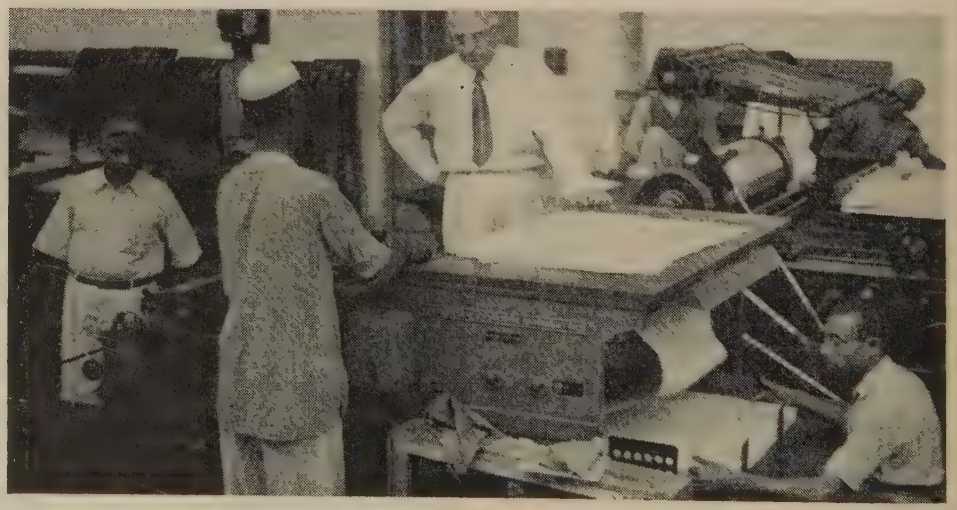
Canon and Mrs. Chandu Ray examine a copy of *The Upper Room* in his office at the Bible House, Lahore, Pakistan. Canon Ray is the redactor of the Urdu edition.

The Lucknow Publishing House, India, where the Hindi and the India (English) editions of *The Upper Room* are published.

When the Urdu edition was first published, Flight Lieutenant H. G. Masih (center) was employed by *The Upper Room*, in Nashville, Tennessee. Now he is back in Karachi, Pakistan, and is shown with his wife, daughter, and pastor.

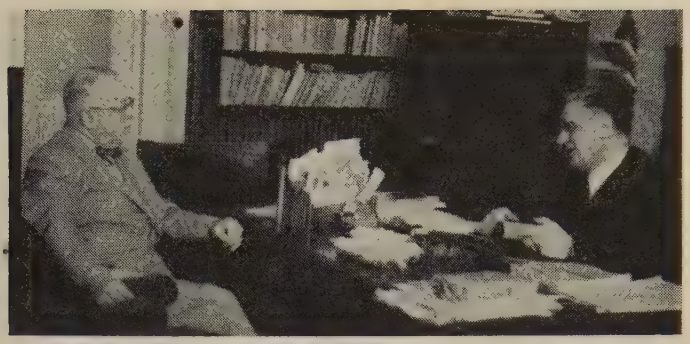


The Rev. W. W. Bell looks on as copies of *The Upper Room* are being printed at the Lucknow Publishing House, Lucknow, India.



Above, the Rev. Chew Hock Hin in his pulpit in Singapore, Malaya. He is responsible for the distribution of many copies of the Chinese edition of *The Upper Room*.

Pictured at right is the Rev. Craig S. Wilder, American missionary, pastor of a Methodist Church in Singapore, Malaya, with a display of *The Upper Room*.



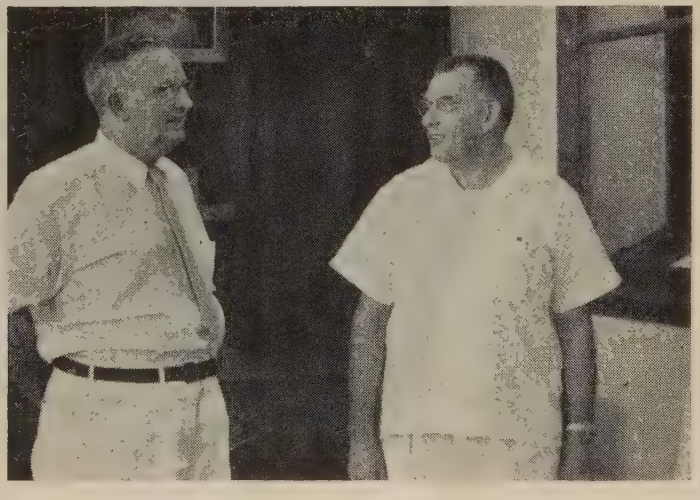
Dr. J. Manning Potts, editor of *The Upper Room*, chats in Rome, Italy, with the Rev. Emanuele Sbaffi, editor of the Italian edition of *The Upper Room*.

Below, in this group in Teheran, Iran, are persons who read *The Upper Room* in one of four different languages—Armenian, Arabic, Persian, and English. Through *The Upper Room* all share each day the same Bible reading, prayer, meditation, and Thought for the Day.

Above, four men who work with the Persian edition of *The Upper Room*, in Teheran, Iran.

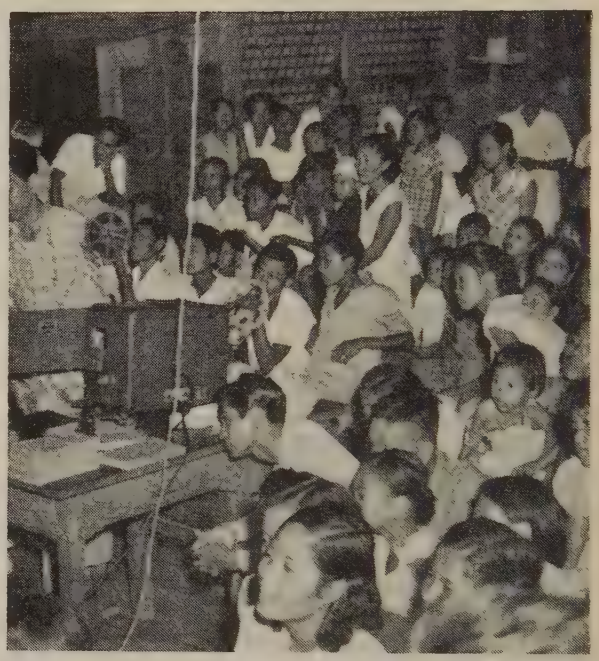
Mrs. J. K. Birge examines a copy of *The Upper Room*. She will supervise the publication of the proposed Turkish edition, Istanbul, Turkey.

Dr. K. E. Wells (left), editor of the Thai edition of *The Upper Room*, and Richard S. Buker, M.D., director of McKean Leprosarium. The Thai edition shares in ministering to more than 3,000 lepers in the Leprosarium.

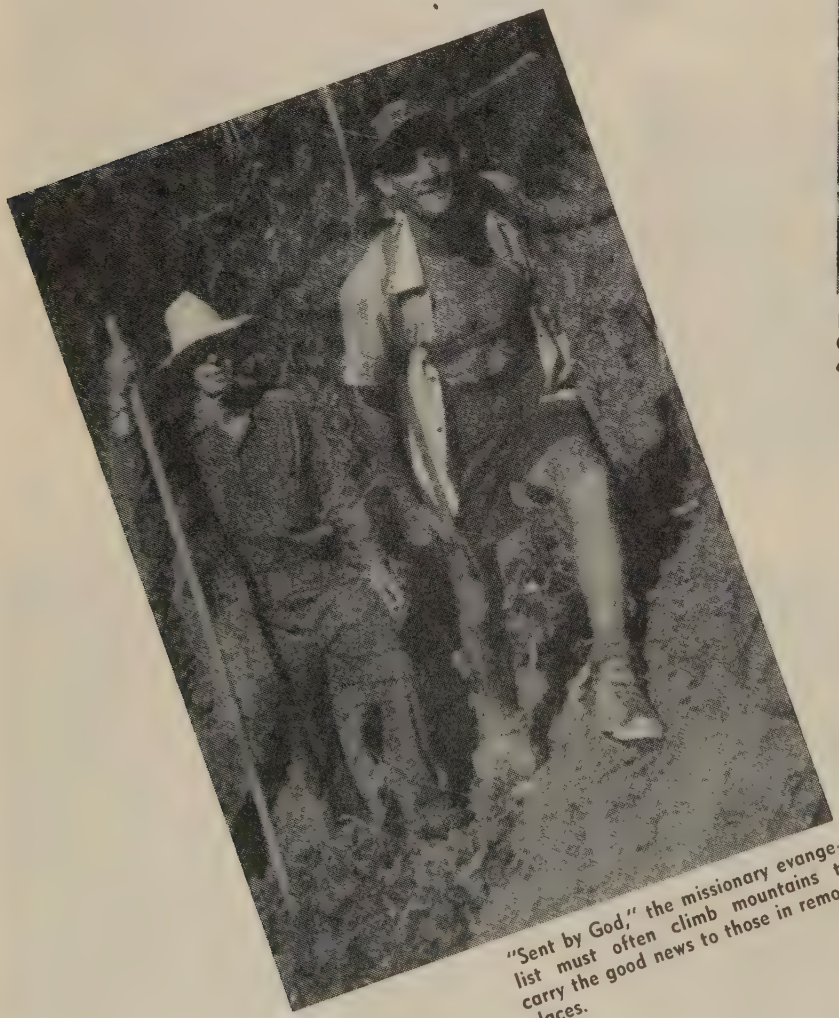


EVANGELISM ON THE PHILIPPINE FRONTIER

Personal visitation is still the most effective method of evangelism in the Philippines. The emphasis is on two-by-two calling in the name of Christ.



By means of audio-visual evangelism the life and challenge of Christ are presented most effectively to thousands who are eager for the gospel.

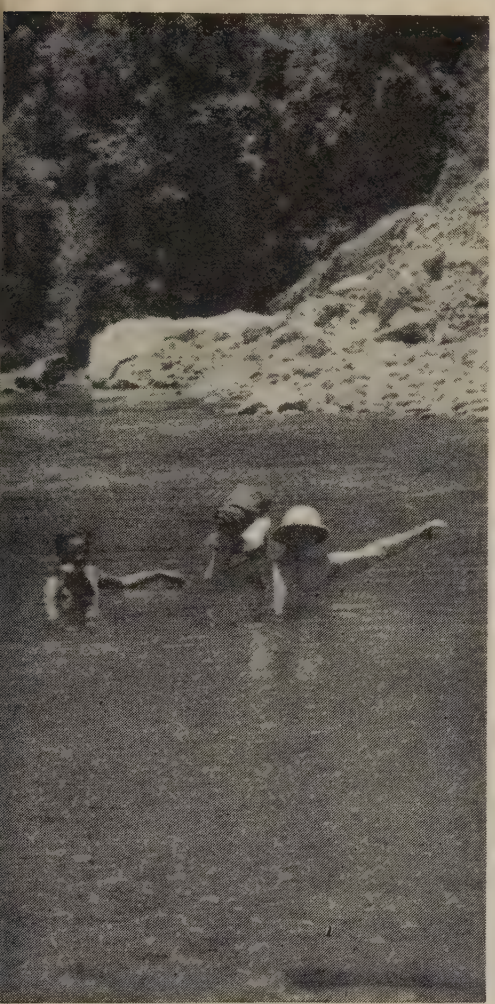


"Sent by God," the missionary evangelist must often climb mountains to carry the good news to those in remote places.

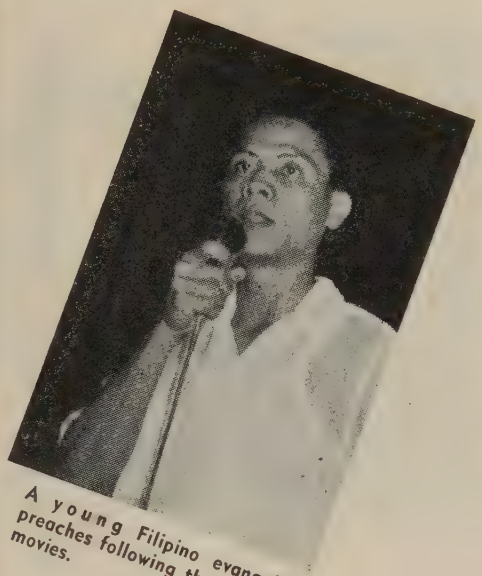
C. L. Spottswood, missionary evangelist in the Philippines.

Miss Dorothy Edwards organizes a small Bible study group. This is another effective means of evangelism in the Philippines.

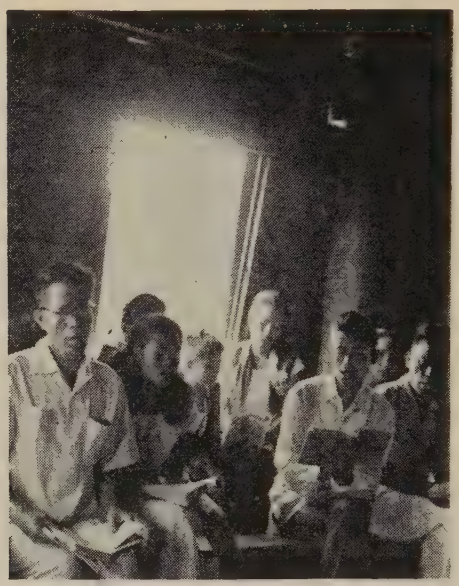
Evangelistic preaching is a part of every district conference. Here those attending such a conference share dinner around a bamboo table.



The missionary evangelist must often ford rivers to make the gospel of Christ known to men.



A young Filipino evangelist preaches following the religious movies.



New converts are encouraged to begin regular services of worship. Thus, they deepen their spiritual life through sharing the adoration of God and through learning more about the meaning of the faith which they have accepted.

New Christians build churches as soon as possible following their conversion. All the people in this picture, with the exception of the pastor, are the Christian product of one week of evangelism, using all methods.

The Institutional Church in Australia

INSTITUTIONAL churches are not dead in Australia. The people call them Central Methodist Missions, and they are very much alive. Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, perhaps others, have their central missions. They have very much the same pattern. They are influencing the cities in a big way. They have social service projects; and, as a rule, they use theaters and radio as well as the churches for sounding boards. They are reaching the people. Most of them are in downtown areas where the people have largely disappeared except during business hours on week days. Business is closed up tight on Sunday.

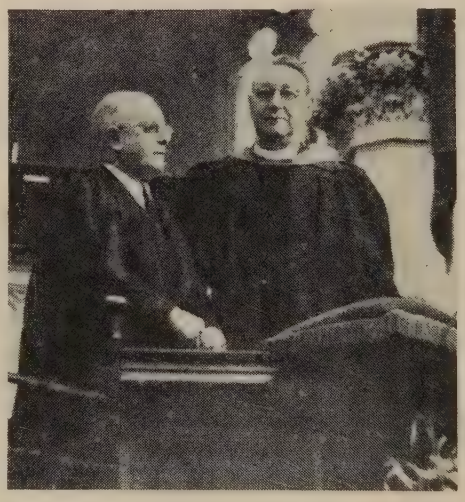
There is the Central Mission in Sydney, where Dr. F. H. Rayward is pastor, Wesley Church and the headquarters for the Australian Methodist Church are in it. It owns the Lyceum Theater, which is used regularly for movies, rented to the operators. The theater is reserved by the church for Sundays and certain events. It seats 1,500 or more people and is full on Sunday afternoons for what is known as "The Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Program." Dr. J. Manning Potts, editor of THE UPPER ROOM, spoke there on Palm Sunday. Bishop Ivan Lee Holt preached there on Palm Sunday evening to a crowded house.

This church not only runs the lyceum programs, but "Sunset Lodge," the Aged Woman's Home, W. G. Taylor Memorial Home for Aged Men, the Men's Hostel and Sydney Night Refuge, the Women's Residential, the Waddell House, the Dolmar Children's Home, the Wesley Hostel, and, *mirabile dictu*, the Foot Clinic.

The Waddell House is a private hospital for female nerve patients and epileptics. At Sylvania there is a settlement of cottages for aged couples. The Central Methodist Mission provides a ministry in the heart of a city which with its suburbs, has more than two million people.

Adelaide has about half a million people. It is a city of churches. It is the capital of the state of South Australia. In South Australia 27 per cent of all the people are Methodists as over against 12 per cent for Australia. In the heart of the city is Pirie Street Methodist Church, which Dr. Henry Howard served for years before going to Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City. He had retired and was preaching in England. The Rev. G. T. Inglis is the pastor.

In Adelaide there is another remarkable Central Mission. The Rev. Edwin Vogt is the pastor. This church owns and operates a 2000-watt radio station 24 hours a day. Good radio programs, with a lot of religion thrown in, are broadcast. The Mission operates a dining hall in the church Community Center. In this building, besides sewing classes and clothes rehabilitation programs, a Latvian choir (these are some of the new Australians), Alcoholics Anonymous, and a Marriage Guidance Council are sponsored. Camps and week-end conferences are likewise sponsored; and, of course, there is Sunday school. It has a Children's Home.



Dr. C. Irving Benson (right), pastor of Central Methodist Church, Melbourne, Australia, in his pulpit with Dr. J. Manning Potts, editor of *The Upper Room*.

On Sunday afternoon the Mission has its PSA program, i.e., Pleasant Sunday Afternoon. It is a broadcast program run by the Rev. G. N. White, who has charge of the radio station and who has been at the mission for 25 years. The church runs a students' hostel, called Shaftesbury House, the Kuitpo Colony, which is a rehabilitation farm for men out of work, alcoholics, and others. They also have a home for the aged. It is a most remarkable story.

A significant piece of work is being done in Brisbane by the Rev. Arthur Preston at the West End Mission. He has the ear of the city. He transferred his evening services for ten weeks to a theater and preached there to large congregations. In connection with his church, he has five nurses who are doing visiting nurse work. He preaches to crowds in his church and is Secretary of Evangelism for the Auckland Conference. He has been active in the Mission to the Nation led by Allan Walker. The evangelistic missions have been most successful.

Another great Central Methodist Mission is that at Melbourne, where Dr. C. Irving Benson is the pastor. His Wesley Church is one of the largest and loveliest in all the southern hemisphere. This church comprises several institutions. There is the church itself. Three times on last Good Friday there were large congregations at 11:00 A.M., 3:00 P.M., and 7:00 P.M. The noted author, Dr. F. W. Boreham, now 83, preached at 11:00. In spite of ill health recently, he was in excellent form as he preached on the Good Shepherd. Dr. J. Manning Potts preached at 3:00 P.M. and again at 7:00 P.M.

The Central Methodist Mission has the Central Mission Sisterhood. Besides the pastors, Dr. Benson, Mr. Lloyd Phillips, and the Rev. A. W. Guy, there are four deaconesses who carry on the social work of the church. There are also the Central Mission Hospital and the Central Mission Boy's Training Farm, which is probably 15 miles from the city at Tally Ho. In addition, there is a Girl's Memorial Home, which is an unmarried mother's home, and the Wesley House for elderly ladies.

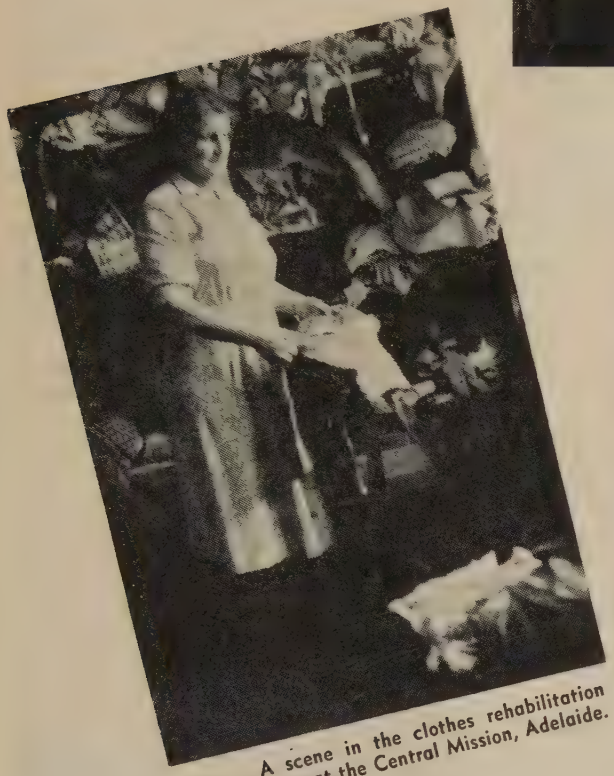
There are two Residential Hostels for Girls. The Princess Mary Club next door to the church has rooms for 176 girls in residence. It is for girls who come to Melbourne to work and study and need a home. The Moreland Hall is for the same purpose. Princess Mary Club looks like a good city hotel.

The Pleasant Sunday Afternoon program has become a national institution. It is known over Australia. It is much of a forum, with outstanding personalities from Sunday to Sunday. Bishop Ivan Lee Holt spoke on this program Easter Sunday, as well as preaching in Wesley Church that Sunday night. In Australia the Sunday evening service in many places is the largest service of the day.

The Rev. Edwin Vogt, pastor of the Central Methodist Mission, Adelaide, Australia.

The Rev. G. N. White, manager of the popular radio program called P.S.A. (Pleasant Sunday Afternoon).

The Princess Mary Club provides accommodations for 176 girls who are working or studying in Melbourne. It is next door to the Wesley Methodist Church.



A scene in the clothes rehabilitation room at the Central Mission, Adelaide.

Bill Davis, radio announcer, with the jackpot question on the P.S.A. program.

Left to right, Dr. R. B. Lew, president of the Methodist Church of Australia and principal of Methodist Ladies' College, Sydney; Dr. F. H. Rayward, pastor, Wesley Methodist Church, Sydney; and Rev. A. E. Brawn, pastor, Balgowlah Methodist Church, Sydney.

The Tally Ho Boys Village, near Melbourne, is a farm settlement for 100 delinquent boys.

THEY HAVE *Stirred* THE NATION

By Roy L. Smith

THE Methodists have stirred Australia with an evangelistic campaign as the nation has not been stirred in a generation.

A series of preaching missions has been conducted across the continent. In every city crowds overflowed the largest halls. The campaign culminated in a national convention of Methodist Youth in the city of Sydney, where 17,000 thronged on its closing night, according to the estimates of the newspapers. By unanimous agreement, it was the greatest gathering of young people in the entire history of the nation.

A series of radio dramas was presented, one each week, for a period of six months. Scores of radio addresses were broadcast and totaled hundreds of hours on the air. Tens of thousands of copies of religious books and pamphlets were scattered throughout the nation, and newspaper stories were published in the great dailies in an altogether unprecedented fashion.

Sense of Unity

As one consequence, a new sense of national unity is coming to birth inside Methodism, which has all too long been all too sadly divided into a series of state conferences, united only by its General Conference which meets once every three years.

In the meantime, according to the census figures, The Methodist Church has risen to second place in the Protestant ranks. It trails only the Anglican Church.

Obviously, such a movement calls for study and evaluation.

It was my privilege to spend the month of January in Australia. During this time I visited every state capital (with one exception), traveled thousands of miles, interviewed scores of people both inside and outside the Church, delivered radio addresses, appeared as the Bible lecturer at the great Youth Convention, and spent days upon end with Methodist laymen and ministers. Such an experience seems to grant the right of expressing a more or less informed opinion.

In order to obtain an adequate understanding of the Australian Methodist Church, it is quite necessary to know just a little Australian history. For many years previous to the American War for Independence, England shipped a large proportion of her jail population to her colonies in the New World. The existing social theory was that a wholesome society could be built up in Britain if those who were criminally inclined could be exported. When western doors closed, it became necessary to look elsewhere for a dumping ground. About 1812, the British Government turned its eyes toward Australia which, at the time, was completely unoccupied except for a few score aborigines.

The prisoners were of two sorts: those who were actually criminal and those who were no more than victims of a stern civil code which was ready to jail a man for the best years of his life for no other crime than that of being in debt. Students of Methodist history will remember that Samuel Wesley, father of John Wesley, was thus incarcerated.

Occasionally, among those shipped to Australia, there were some individuals called Methodists. Also among the deportees were those who had been converted under Methodist preaching while in prison. At least one such person began a program of vigorous personal evangelism almost from the first hour he stood on Australian soil. His efforts resulted in the organization of a church. As a consequence of many such efforts, Methodist churches appeared on the continent before any preacher came; and the first missionaries found fully organized groups functioning when they arrived. A laymen's movement had accomplished it.

Down through the years there have been a number of great revivals in Australia under Methodist leadership. Some of these have stirred the nation profoundly. The most notable was led by "California" Taylor, later to be known as Bishop William Taylor of American Methodism, the dramatic and eccentric, but highly successful, missionary and evangelist. It has been said that no man has ever stirred the nation so deeply and left so profound a mark on the life of the people as he did. But, unhappily, there has been no such religious revival in more than a generation. To many, it seemed that the time was ripe for a new work of God.

In 1949, under the inspiration of the "Crusade for Christ" which had just concluded in America with such gratifying results, the Australian Church undertook to launch a similar movement, using laymen in visitation evangelism. Although the results were far from satisfactory, Methodism did set her stakes ahead and did make progress. But, as one leader expressed the matter, "It was a dead lift to draw the whole Church to an evangelistic enterprise."

A New Spirit

When the year 1953 approached, a new spirit took hold of the Church. Much of the American plan and literature, which had been copied more or less slavishly, were now abandoned, and a strictly Australian pattern was designed to which was given the name *The Mission to the Nation.*

It was planned to be exactly that—a straightforward appeal, by every possible means of communication, to every man, woman, and child in the nation.

At that point there occurred an incident which had the effect of galvanizing the entire plan into a coherent plan of action. The leading advertising man of the nation was converted under circumstances which convinced many that the experience was a direct intervention of God. This reborn man put all the resources of his great and skillful organization at the disposal of the *Mission to the Nation* and laid out a revolutionary program of approach. It was to include radio, newspaper, dramatic, and industrial presentations. The cost of the campaign, estimated at more than $100,-

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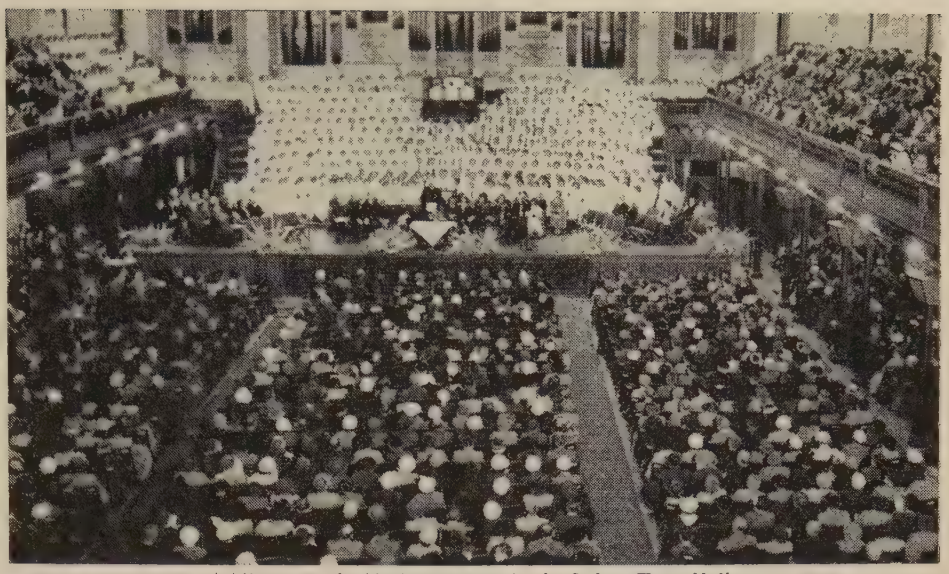
Dr. Smith, a former editor of The Christian Advocate *and a former Publishing Agent of The Methodist Publishing House, is one of America's most popular writers. Here he gives his impressions of Australia's recent Mission to the Nation.*

000, was underwritten in a whirlwind campaign to get the movement off to an exciting start.

Through a period of six months a 30-minute dramatic performance, professionally produced, was broadcast over a national network. It elicited the most enthusiastic acclaim. As some evidence of the effectiveness of this weekly offering, one must tell the story of one of the programs which dealt with the liquor problem in a most forthright and factual manner. Almost immediately the broadcasters attempted to repudiate their contract, but so strong was the supporting pressure that they failed. The spiritual results were spectacular. Pastors were asked for interviews, a flood of mail flowed in to headquarters, and plain people on the street began to talk about religion.

Week-long preaching missions were planned for each of the state capitals. The committee in charge insisted that the meetings be held in town halls and other large meeting places which were non-ecclesiastical in nature. The first mission, held in Melbourne, a city of 1,500,000 population, was a success beyond any man's dream. Not only was the huge town hall overcrowded, but half a dozen churches to which the services were carried by remote control were likewise packed out. Never in the history of the nation had there been such an outpouring of people for any purpose other than a great sporting event.

In Sydney (2,000,000), Brisbane (500,000), Adelaide (460,000), Perth (300,000), Hobart (200,000), and other cities results were similar. Meetings held in smaller towns and cities, of which there were scores, duplicated the larger meetings proportionately.



A Mission to the Nation meeting in the Sydney Town Hall.

In one city the missioners were on the air 28 full hours in the course of eight days. In that same city the four daily papers gave 56 feet of space to the meetings. They reported sermons and Bible lectures at great length. Everywhere the channels of communication were wide open to the Methodist message.

National Convention

For the opening of the year 1955 a great national convention of Christian youth was planned. Delegates came at their own expense from all parts of the continent, from the Pacific Islands, and from the mission fields. On the occasion of their opening service, 7,000 paraded the streets of Sydney, with five bands in the line of march. Thousands lined the streets to cheer them on their way. In addition to the throng of delegates that swarmed into the vast Town Hall, the overflow filled four large churches and assembly places in the vicinity. Thousands more listened on the streets.

On the closing night of the great youth convention, in spite of a downpouring rain, 17,000 people gathered in the huge amphitheater of the city showgrounds (we would call them the State Fair Grounds) to witness and participate in a vast service of dedication. One of the most thrilling sights anyone could ever have witnessed occurred when 2,500 young people knelt in the midst of the deluge on the grassy field, their faces toward a lighted cross, and dedicated themselves in an intensely solemn service as they offered their lives to Christ and His Church. Two days before, 2,300 of them had participated in the service of the Holy Communion. This was the largest such service ever held in the history of Australian Protestantism. More than 100 of these young people professed their first dedication to Jesus Christ during the convention. Scores offered their lives as missionaries and preachers of the gospel.

If the story were to end at this point, it would seem that the *Mission to the Nation* was a huge and indubitable success. But certain stubborn facts must be recognized, and their significance must be evaluated.

In the first place, the chief missioners admit very frankly that the huge meetings were composed, for the most part, of audiences made up predominantly of Church people. One of those most devoted to the Mission estimated that the average audience consisted of 95 per cent converted and no more than five per cent unconverted people. Perhaps that estimate was pessimistic.

In the second place, no church re-

The Mission to the Nation Crusader Choir of 500 voices marching in a procession of witness—a feature in each city of the Mission's program.

ported that it received any large number of new accessions which could be attributed directly to the preaching of the missioners. True, hundreds did profess their commitment; but there was no large membership gain which could be traced to the missions.

The missioners went wherever they could get a hearing—into shops, stores, schools, homes, and other gatherings. They were cordially and respectfully received. As one of the results, more than 20 young people, representing labor unions, were in attendance on the youth convention. Their wages were paid for the time they took off from their work by their fellow workmen.

But, on the whole, it must be admitted that the great mass of the unchurched was left unconverted, though thousands were deeply impressed.

Even among those ministers and laymen who have been critical, however, it is conceded that the *Mission to the Nation* produced an entirely new climate. It became fashionable to talk about religion in stores, at lunch clubs, in shops, in schools, and at athletic games. In this climate the local pastor is able to make an appeal that he never made before to the unchurched.

Perhaps the most important immediate result is the great increase of evangelistic preaching now heard inside the local church. "Our preacher is sounding an entirely new note in the pulpit," one layman said to me. "The Mission taught me how important it is to press for personal decisions," said one preacher in describing the emphasis that is appearing in his preaching.

A Great Lesson

The Church has learned at least one great lesson. "Good preaching is not enough," said one man who had been the chairman of the Mission in his state. "We could not have had better preaching than was ours. The missioner was superb. His messages were scriptural, convincing, and empowered. But that is not enough." There are those who are now saying that a great nation-wide campaign of personal lay evangelism has become both a necessity and a possibility as a result of this spectacular *Mission to the Nation.*

"There can be no letup in our pulpit ministry," said one preacher who has been greatly moved by the Mission, "but we cannot count on the unconverted coming into the house of God to be saved. The Church must go outside itself in order to find and convict those in need of Jesus Christ."

Meanwhile, the youth have voted for another great national convention two years hence. Hundreds of thousands of pieces of Christian literature have been broadcast throughout the nation. The newspapers are eagerly seeking news from the churches. In all my experience, I have never found great daily papers so interested in getting interviews on the subject of religion. The name of the Mission, of the Church, and of God are on the lips of all people. Clerks in stores, taxi drivers, hotel waitresses, and plain people, seeing my convention badge, stopped to talk about the *Mission to the Nation* and The Methodist Church.

The Mission did not usher in the millennium, but it did convince Australia that the Church of Jesus Christ was desperately concerned about an unsaved world. That, in itself, is a great gain.

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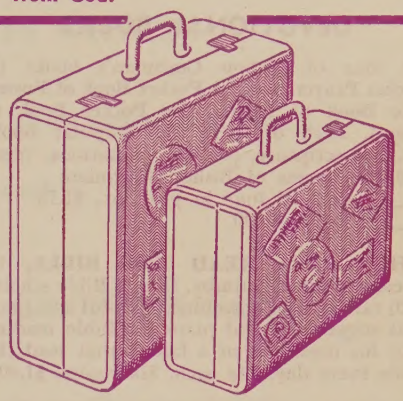

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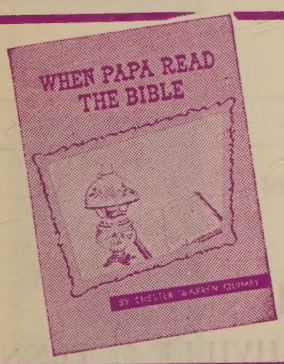

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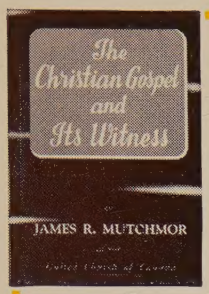

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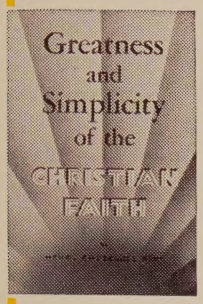

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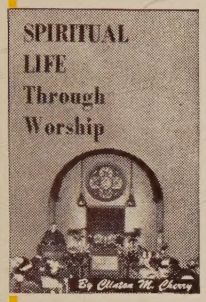

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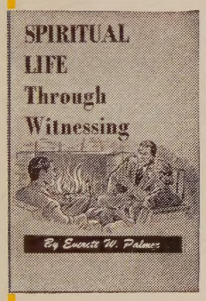

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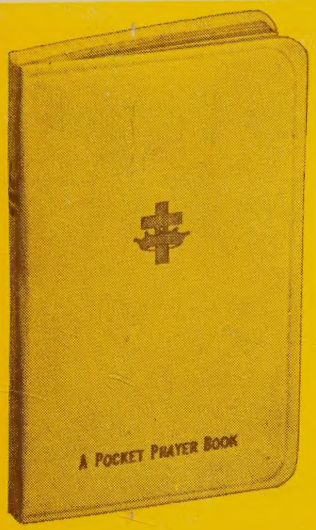

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